

# THE CANADIAN FORUM

Twenty-Ninth Year of Issue

December, 1949

## Merry Christmas

► THE ORIGINAL CHRISTMAS was born of primitive fear. The fear of the growing darkness and the shortening days produced the rite of kindled fires, and the fear of winter the cult of the evergreen tree. Since then, Christmas has been wrapped up in one layer after another of an advancing civilization. Christianity came with its lovely serene story of a divine child and a virgin mother; the Middle Ages brought the carols, and then came the presents, the roast fowls, the mince pies and the plum puddings. Our present form of Christmas, with its Santa Claus, its Christmas tree, and its exchange of cards, is a nineteenth-century invention, largely of German origin, the product of the age of Dickens and Albert the Good, of the British Empire and voluntary charities.

Yet even in this cosy urban middle-class Christmas something of the old panic recurs. There is unmistakable panic in the advertisers' desperate appeals of "only so many shopping days left," with its lurking threat that only if enough people spend enough money will this dollar civilization be able to stagger once more around the calendar. There is, if not panic, at any rate compulsion, in the popular response to this appeal, in the set faces of the women checking items off a list and in the apathy of their husbands trudging behind them, envying the bears.

What is the thoughtful observer to make of all this? Apart from the children, is it not the frivolous who enjoy

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NO ROOM AT THE INN

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### MERRY CHRISTMAS—continued

Christmas, or pretend to enjoy it? Who else would find any real release in an orgy of synthetic gaiety as this dreadful century lurches to its halfway mark? Surely one is not a sourfaced Puritan if one feels, after listening to the radio reports of the cheering crowds in Times Square: "There is nothing here that reminds me of the birth of Christ; there is much that reminds me of Belshazzar of Babylon, who feasted while his city was in flames, and who could not read the writing on the wall."

One may find it instructive to compare the two Christmas stories in Matthew and in Luke. The Christmas story that we know and love is almost entirely from Luke. Matthew tells a terrible and gloomy tale of a jealous tyrant who filled the land with dead children and wailing mothers, while the wise men escaped from the country in one direction and the Holy Family in another. It is a tale in which all the characters except the tyrant and his minions are either murdered or refugees. Today we know as never before that this, too, is part of the Christmas story. But the story of Luke, with the shepherds and the manger and the angels singing hymns of peace and goodwill to men, does not cease to be true because the story of Matthew is also true. The story of Christmas, from its primitive beginnings to the present, is in part a story of how men, by cowering together in a common fear of menace, discovered a new fellowship, in fellowship a new hope, and in hope a new vision of society.

As Dickens shows us, the ghost of Christmas past brings us only regret for the past, and the ghost of Christmas future brings us only the terror of the future. But he also shows us that one of the surest ways of making the possible nightmare in the future come true is to fail to know and appreciate better the spirit of Christmas present. And so, without hypocrisy and as far as possible without frivolousness, we wish our readers once more a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

### THE CANADIAN FORUM

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### ABBOTT IN WONDERLAND—continued

Nov. 5.—Protests from tenants and labor organizations continued to mount over the announcement that landlords may raise rents starting December 15. Mr. A. R. Mosher, president of the Canadian Congress of Labor, stated that the idea of calling a one-day national strike as suggested by the Montreal Boot and Shoe Workers' Union was "utter nonsense." R. M. Willes Chitty, of Toronto, vice-president of the Property Owners' Association, commented that "half a loaf is better than none."

In Montreal, Hon. Douglas Abbott told reporters he did not think the increased rents should lead to demands for higher wages. "It must be understood that in recent years wage rates have gone up very much higher than rental costs . . . I see no justification for any such demand for higher wages and I am certain the increase will not affect the cost of living of the individual," stated the Minister.

Nov. 6.—The government's stated case to the Supreme Court of Canada in the matter of rents will be a case for decontrol rather than for control. The question to be referred will ask in effect whether, in the interest of orderly decontrol, the government can constitutionally complete its present decontrol program.

Nov. 7.—Trades and Labor Congress unions may seek new wage increases as a result of higher rents and a possibly higher cost of living resulting from dollar devaluation, according to Percy Bengough, T.L.C. president.

Nov. 7.—The boost in rental ceilings which comes into effect 10 days before Christmas may hit some 4,000,000 Canadians living in rented rooms, flats, apartments and houses, government officials estimated. It is further estimated that at least 90 per cent of leased accommodation in the large urban areas is rented on a month-to-month basis. Such tenants will have to receive a month's notice as from December 31, so increases will not go into effect until February 1, 1950.

Nov. 7.—A Toronto *Globe and Mail* editorial termed government policy "inept floundering" and referred to the "blundering ineptitude" of the new regulations. A Toronto *Daily Star* editorial stated that if the Conservatives of Ontario are critical of the latest measure of decontrol, they have only to ask through Premier Frost of Ontario to have the power transferred to his government and he can make whatever changes he likes.

Nov. 7.—A story from Ottawa stated that Mr. Abbott's rent will not be increased. His landlord is an employee of the Department of Finance and Mr. Abbott has a lease.

Nov. 8.—The House of Commons debate on rent controls lasted four hours, during which M. J. Coldwell, Donald M. Fleming, C. E. Johnson (S.C.), Stanley Knowles and Joseph Noseworthy condemned the government bitterly

(Continued on Page 197)

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# THE CANADIAN FORUM

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## American Politics

President Truman's victory in November, 1948, did not make Senators and Representatives much more amenable to presidential Fair Deal leadership than they had been in the eightieth Congress. But now, in November, 1949, the Democrats have been winning more successes. And the Lehman victory over Mr. Dulles in the New York senatorial contest seems to be taken by all the commentators to mean that the voters are still Fair-Deal in sentiment, and that there will be further Democratic gains in the 1950 congressional elections, followed by another presidential victory in 1952. In the New York contest Mr. Dulles, the personal nominee of Governor Dewey, abandoned the Dewey me-too attitude of 1948 towards social security, housing, and health legislation, and launched an all-out attack on the welfare state. "Statism," he said, was "plunging the American people into a totalitarian dictatorship from which they might have to fight their way out by force." The Dulles defeat presumably eliminates William Jennings Dewey from his role of perpetual candidate for the presidency. But this means that Republican leadership will pass to a much more pronounced conservative, Senator Taft of Ohio.

A new pattern of American politics seems to be emerging, which should be of considerable interest to us in Canada. From the 1860's to 1930 the Republican party was the majority party in the United States, and the American people used the Democratic party only for the purpose of disciplining the Republicans from time to time. Since 1930 the Democratic party has become more and more clearly the majority party, and it represents a majority who demand state action for the benefit of the little people. The Democrats appear to be winning the farmers of the mid-West from their hereditary Republican allegiance. They are sloughing off the well-to-do conservatives of the South. They have won the Negroes of the North, and the minority racial groups in the big cities. Their alliance with labor becomes solid every week. No longer are American liberals talking of a third party. The two-party alignment is firmer than ever, but it is becoming an alignment between a conservative businessmen's party on the right and a mass party of the poorer classes on the left. Also, the social groups who vote Democrat are likewise the groups who breed the big families, so that the Democrat majority twenty years from now will be larger than ever.

The Republicans, like our party of big business in Canada, the Progressive Conservatives, have convinced their fellow citizens that their conservatism is simply an expression of class selfishness. Unless the spokesmen of the big business interests can supply some convincing evidence that they are also interested in the welfare of farmers, industrial workers, young people, non-Anglo-Saxon stocks, little business men, their political party has not much future.

## Better Education

Canada has at least one Minister of Education with sound ideas. The Hon. Dana Porter has just announced his plans for a new curriculum in the Ontario schools. When educational needs are so great, it would be ungenerous to seek flaws in a plan on the whole so good. The plan, for example, recognizes what educators have been saying for years about the education of the adolescent. Our

present system violates the psycho-biological development of the child by making a sharp break (between public and high school) in the very middle of a period where security and continuity are most needed as the child struggles to make the transfer from dependence upon parents to dependence upon wider aspects of reality including his own inner resources. With a school-leaving age fixed at 16, our culture seems to expect a relative independence at that age. This, coupled with the considerably more important facts of natural development, gives point to the treatment of Grades 7, 8, 9 and 10 as a unit. Official recognition of a plan generally known as the junior high school is certainly one of the chief merits of Mr. Porter's scheme. Below this intermediate level a primary and a junior division are proposed. Other educators would have settled for one division here; but Mr. Porter is away out in front.

The plan calls for keeping classes down to a number between twenty-four and thirty. Wonderful! Our children hitherto have been crammed into classes of forty. Each class in the primary and junior divisions will contain from eight to ten pupils in each of the three grades of the division. In a room of, say, twenty-seven pupils nine will be promoted and nine will enter each year. There will thus be a continuing community of teacher and pupils over a three year period. ("Gosh," one of our children remarked as we explained the plan, "I hope it won't be that Miss Blank.") All this—the smaller groups, the wider age-range of normal playmates, the security of a continuing community, the possibility of a teacher's being able to allow for a child's development with understanding over a reasonable period of time—all this is an educator's heaven. And there is much else that is good. The plan makes a bold effort to move away from mass education. Uniform textbooks are only to be used for basic skills (the three R's). Of course, the department has for years imposed a uniform system of writing on the public school children of Ontario, and with a uniform result—illegibility. The old method, and we hope "old" is the right description of it, consisted in making five strokes of the pen where two or three would do, and always moving the arm where the fingers would do. Never have so many sledge-hammers been used to drive in so few tacks. Now is the time to change the system drastically, else proletarian editors will soon only be able to read communications from graduates of the private schools who got out from under the curlicues long ago.

Beyond the three R's, we are to have some local autonomy in the organization of the curriculum and the selection of texts. This gets education nearer to where it belongs, local groups of families with their school boards and the teachers of the children. This will set the good teacher free to teach children, instead of having to peddle a uniform departmental line about Tennyson's poetry, for example.

However, the most wonderful feature of all in the Minister's plan is the solution of some of the pressing problems of space and teachers. Where there now exist three classrooms with three teachers and forty children each, there will in future be four classrooms with four teachers and thirty children each. And this, so far as reports carry us to date, will be accomplished with no more buildings, no more rooms, no more teachers and no more budget than before. Mr. Porter is not only an educator, he is a magician. And he won't reveal the trick. For our part, we should

have been quite content with the actual substance of the junior high schools we had heard rumors about. They would have been better than spending two years in public school followed by two years in high school with a departmental ruling abolishing exams in the middle and saying that it is all one grand division, anyway. The Minister is reported to have said that separate school children will attend their schools up to Grade 8 and then go on to the new intermediate division in Grade 9, while the same report continues by quoting Cardinal McGuigan as expressing confidence that the proposed plan "adjusts itself to the present arrangement by which separate school boards can provide education up to Grade 10." His Eminence, more skilled in the recognition of magic than Mr. Porter, has thus reminded the Minister of a grim political reality.

Well, on the whole we are all for the plan, as we said at the beginning. We can even forgive Mr. Porter's impatience with the Hope Commission, if that is what it was. We share the impatience. However, we await with some interest the attack upon the serious political and economic problems which the plan presents. We still believe that if Canadians want what Mr. Porter proposes, federal subsidies, realistic budgeting, more schools (yes, actual "intermediate divisions"), better paid teachers, and a sweeping reform of the normal schools will be necessary. Let's get at this, and not be bamboozled by the supposed rabbits in Mr. Porter's hat.

## Juvenile Courts

This year is the fiftieth anniversary of the first Juvenile Court which was set up at Chicago, Illinois, in 1899. In the same year the Toronto City Council appointed three commissioners to handle juvenile problems, but as there was no legislation giving them legal powers this experiment had to be abandoned. The Act legalizing the establishment of Juvenile Courts in Canada was passed by the Dominion Parliament in 1908, with the first court being set up in Ottawa in 1910, followed by Toronto in 1912.

Since that time many of the larger centres across Canada have established such courts, but many towns, counties and districts have no such facilities for the treatment of delinquent juveniles. Many of the present courts have not made full use of the services of psychiatrists, psychologists, trained probation officers and observation homes which have proved their value in juvenile courts. New developments have been retarded because in most cases the local community pays the cost with little, if any, help from provincial governments and none from the Dominion. Yet the value of the court in part lies in the prevention of adult crime, the cost of which is borne in the main by provincial and federal governments. Thus one taxing body must be persuaded to spend money to save money for another taxing body.

The fact that the local municipality pays the costs also results in little or no leadership from provincial governments for the establishment of new courts or the improvement of the standards of the present courts because they hesitate to interfere in local affairs. Judges and probation officers need to be specially trained and picked with care for this combined social-legal job and should be allowed to devote their full time to this work. This can only be accomplished in much of the Dominion by combining judicial districts and establishing circuit juvenile courts. A full-time judge and court clerk would move from centre to centre and probation officers would be located at strategic points in the district to keep in close touch with the children, their families and the community. The maximum age for juvenile court is eighteen years in three provinces and sixteen years in the others, and this is too important a matter to be governed by pro-

vincial boundaries. The juvenile court is well past its majority; it has proved its worth, but the time has come to put this service on a Dominion-wide basis.

## R.C.N.

The investigating commission claims that the "technical mutinies" which occurred in the Royal Canadian Navy last spring were unjustified. The report's forty-one suggested reforms admit that unsatisfactory conditions exist, but ignore the fact that no action was taken until the men staged several sit-down strikes.

Since its inception the Canadian Navy has slavishly aped the parent body. During hostilities the Articles of War posted in Canadian bases stated in Item I: "God shall be worshipped aboard all H.M. ships according to the rites of the Established Church of England." We are forced to conclude that encouraging junior officers to drop their phony English accents and painting maple leaves on the ships' funnels will do little to "Canadianize" our not-too-silent service.

Nor will the deplored gulf between officer and rating be cured by a more patronizing attitude on the part of the commission holders. A young man who has had tea with the Governor-General is not necessarily a superior being.

## Letter from London

*Stella Harrison*

►THE CANADIAN WINTER may already lie hard and silent across the north of the American continent as you read this. But as I write, the swish of autumn rain in the sodden leaves fallen from London trees is punctuated with the noise of massed voices and minor explosions. This first weekend of November is dedicated to remembrance.

On the bombsite behind the house, its flowered summer dress of fireweed faded to a stained drab, boys from the pre-fabs are letting off fireworks after a week of pleading with passers-by to "remember the guy." In London's largest assembly hall are gathered in a Festival of Remembrance six thousand citizens whose voices surge across the radio in the ragged unison of community singing. By coincidence, Guy Fawkes night brings the bangs that most readily remind us of the last war at the very moment when we are exhorted to deliberate remembrance of it, and of the one before.

School broadcasts and Children's Hours have made the young generation far more aware of the significance of the Gunpowder Plot and Parliament and so on than my generation was, even though the anniversary is still celebrated mainly by the burning of effigies and the letting-off of crackers. The grown-ups, however, planting their crosses in the turf before Westminster Abbey and laying their wreaths of Flanders poppies at war memorials, seem to drift further from intelligent recollection as the once spontaneous gestures stiffen year by year into ritual motions. Our remembrance has become encrusted in pageantry, one of our colorful traditions whose origins we tend to forget the more faithfully we observe its ceremonial.

The poppy emblem was not chosen haphazardly. It has survived from trench warfare through guided-missile and atomic warfare just as the flower itself has gone on blooming along the fringes of French fields through invasion and occupation and liberation. Yet here in England we wear a Flanders poppy once a year and pause hardly that often to think of France. Or if we do, other than as a tourist's treat, it is with a frown of impatience. Unstable and sometimes venal in her domestic politics, suspicious and intransigent

in her foreign policy, our neighbor and ally evokes nothing like the sympathy we are beginning to feel for the "new" Germany. In our generous impulse toward forgiveness of our enemies, we make little attempt to understand the unsentimental character of French remembrance.

A month ago I was at Rambouillet, the country residence of the President of the Republic (who was suffering from toothache and a cabinet crisis). Wandering through the lovely park where Marie Antoinette used to play at milkmaids and shepherdesses, I came across the Sea-shell Pavilion. From outside, it is a simple thatched huntsman's lodge. Inside, the walls are covered from floor to ceiling in exquisite floral designs, executed entirely—bouquets, garlands and foliage—in mother-of-pearl and the pastel-tinted shells of sea creatures. I said the walls are covered. I should have said were. For to the height of a man's shoulder, the terracotta plaster shows red where Prussian sabres smashed the delicate petals during the occupation of 1870-71. The panels of the retiring-room within the pavilion used to conceal puppet valets, which at the touch of a spring came out to proffer powder and perfume. The dolls were wrenched off in the latest occupation and carried away to swell a war criminal's artistic collection.

From Rambouillet I went to visit my small friend Richard, aged six. He is called Richard because it is the same in French as in German. His French parents, like all those in Alsace, were not allowed to give him anything but a German name, not allowed to name a French child after his French father, under the occupation. Who outside France has any idea of the meticulous oppression which was practised in the eastern departments?

Vandalism, persecution, looting; starvation, exploitation, deportation. In three wars the same invaders trampling the same poppy-fringed fields, the same jackboots strutting along the same cobbled streets, have made every day a day of remembrance for a million Frenchmen.

The fact that M. Bidault was successful in forming a government when the more efficient M. Moch and the more adroit M. René Mayer had failed, is not unconnected with war memories. All had more or less the support of the center coalition parties, and no party had a clear lead. But a number of deputies who were prepared to see France flounder into constitutional chaos rather than vote for the Socialist Moch or the Radical Mayer, could not bring themselves to vote publicly against the Resistance leader Bidault. His prestige in the National Assembly as in the country rests on his record of resistance to the Germans.

The French recall too that after the First World War American capitalism was quick to invest in the "reconstruction" out of which Germany forged the armaments of the Second World War. Current events have a we-have-been-here-before look about them to the unforgettable French. If Germany is to be admitted into the Council of Europe while strikes prevent the dismantling of her war-potential factories, will it be unpatriotic of us to stop and ask ourselves if this is not where we came in? Maybe it isn't. Maybe the Federal Chancellor was misreported as saying: "If France should demand too great a measure of security, ignoring vital German needs, then our attitude is likely to stiffen."\*

Maybe Germany has changed and the French are unduly suspicious and everything is going to be all right under the benevolent patronage of democratic American capitalism. But none the less, we ought to include in our thoughts for Remembrance Day some of the European facts of life. We owe it to the living and we owe it to the heroic dead.

*London, England, November, 1949.*

**ABBOTT IN WONDERLAND—continued from Page 194**

and pointed out the cumulative effect of the new increases on top of previous increases of 10 per cent in 1947 and 5 per cent in 1948. No Liberal members other than Mr. Abbott spoke despite a story that some Liberal members protested bitterly to the Minister.

Nov. 9—It was disclosed that the new percentage increases in rental ceilings would be calculated on a basic rental and not on the amount now being paid by tenants. "In other words, the increases are not cumulative," said Mr. Abbott. A simple procedure to calculate the new increases is being worked out and will be announced shortly.

Nov. 10—The Quebec government will ask the Supreme Court to rule that the federal government has no authority to control rentals, it was learned in Ottawa. The Union Nationale government is not taking a stand against rent controls, but will argue that it is a field for provincial jurisdiction under the B.N.A. Act.

Nov. 10—Owen Lobley, Canada's rental administrator, fixed maximum rental boosts for self-contained dwellings at 18 per cent and 22 per cent of current rental ceilings, when unheated and heated respectively. A self-contained dwelling is defined as one in which a tenant does not have to share the water-closet. Tenants who agree to pay the increases must be given a new lease running for at least a year. In no case can it terminate before May 1, 1951.

Landlords and tenants may negotiate leases of two years or more at any rent, not subject to approval of the Rentals Administration. Landlords who bought before November 1, that is, most landlords, can recover possession of their properties for their own use if six months' notice is given.

If a paraphrase may be permitted, a good many Canadians are wondering how so much confusion could be spread by so few among so many.

## The Politics of Freedom

### Frank H. Underhill

► PRESUMABLY BOTH CCFers and Progressive Conservatives are putting in a good deal of time just now re-examining their policies and philosophies in an effort to discover why they failed so lamentably to attract the Canadian electorate June 27. My own personal impression is that most decent Canadians found the tory leadership and campaign positively repulsive, and that the only effect of our socialist appeals was to bore them. The CCF, as happens to so many radical movements when they grow up, is at present revealing a far too rigid conservatism. Its spokesmen are still living in the atmosphere of its year of birth, 1932; they are still fighting the Bennett depression; they are still making the same old analysis of conditions, and still repeating the same old slogans and clichés which were fresh and pointed in 1932 but which seem to most people to have become unspeakably stale since then.

For in the years since 1932 the world has gone through a very severe shaking-up—politically, economically, intellectually, and morally. As Hans Kohn puts it in his preface, "The years of mortal crisis have taught us much about the inhumanity of man and the vulnerability of civilization." And while the electorate are not very articulate about these intangible realities, they do expect a political party to show that it is fully conscious of the deepest experiences through which they have been going. Now the deepest experience of our present generation centres about the problem of freedom. We have just emerged from a great war which was fought for the preservation of free society; and we seem to be drifting towards another one. We have had a terrifying

December, 1949

revelation of what totalitarianism means; and we have become acutely aware how weak is the position of the individual and how deep-rooted are the totalitarian potentialities in our contemporary society of large-scale industry and large-scale government. We are far more pessimistic, and thereby, as we hope, far more realistic than we were twenty years ago when the depression first hit us.

In these circumstances conservatives all over our Anglo-American world are going through a fit of political delirium tremens. (The phrase is from Professor Schlesinger.) They all see the same pink elephant. They lump together New Deal, Fair Deal, Fabian Socialism, and Communism as being all alike manifestations of "Statism" (they have quickly forgotten Fascism) and they shout with one accord that free markets make free men. This is mostly hysteria. But in answer to it CCFers and other democratic socialists have seemed to most thinking people to be far too easily optimistic about the democratic and liberal aspect of their socialism. We need to do some serious re-thinking about the relationship of our type of socialism to the liberal tradition which has been the most precious inheritance of the history of the last few centuries. In 1932 we took this relationship for granted; we were socialists because we wanted to widen the range of liberty. I believe we were right in our conception of ourselves, but we ought to realize by now, after the terrible experiences through which our western world has gone since then, that the problem of freedom is more subtle and complex than we thought in our youth, and that it is not likely to be solved by a mere re-organization of economic institutions.

At any rate, now that we are assured of the leisure of opposition for the next few years, it would do us good to read and ponder some of the books\* dealing with the individual's relations to society which discuss wider and deeper issues than were raised in the Regina Manifesto.

Mr. Saunders's book has as subtitle "The Rise and Decline of Liberalism in Europe since 1815." He combines very attractively an account of political events with an analysis of intellectual trends. He discusses poetry and novels, along with religion, science, and philosophy, to show how delusive and short-lived was the triumph of liberalism after the upheavals of 1789, and how the rise of Bismarck as the leader of the counter-reformation coincided with an intellectual reaction that has culminated in our own day. He is interesting throughout on the relations of socialist thinking to these developments, though he neglects almost entirely the Fabianism of his own country. The fundamental weakness of liberalism, he says, again neglecting his own country, was that it never penetrated to the masses. "Nationalism, the bastard child of Liberalism . . . at last captured the loyalty of the masses, was accepted as a new god, and repudiated and slew its parent." The League of Nations was "a moribund Liberalism's last gift to the world . . . a secularized version of the medieval *Res publica Christiana*." Of course, one can see that this is all leading up to the orthodox conclusion of the religious, that we have come to the end of Modern History and are entering on a New Middle Ages. But Mr. Saunders doesn't seem to be quite sure of this in his last few sentences. His book is rather slapdash, too fond of deep shadows lit up by lurid flashes of lightning; too sure that Liberalism had no future after the 1860's; but it makes a good popular history of its period.

\*THE AGE OF REVOLUTION: J. J. Saunders; George J. McLeod; pp. 311; \$4.50.  
THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: Hans Kohn; Macmillan; pp. xi, 242; \$3.00.  
THE VITAL CENTER: Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.; Thomas Allen (Houghton Mifflin); pp. 274; \$3.75.  
THE POLITICAL TRADITION OF THE WEST: Frederick Watkins; S. J. Reginald Saunders; pp. xiv, 368; \$6.50.

Professor Kohn has made himself through his many books and articles our standard authority on the history of the spirit of nationalism in the modern world. In this book he has woven some of his recent articles into what he calls "a midway account of the western world." He thinks the middle of the twentieth century may turn out to be as decisive a turning-point in world history as was the middle of the nineteenth century, 1848. And his book is a stimulating and suggestive analysis of how national animosities and class struggle destroyed the promise of the springtime of 1848 so that, instead of universal fraternal order above classes and nations, we have come to the bleak winter of the 1940's. Napoleon III was the first example of the new force, "the authoritarian state backed by the masses and their emotional drives of nationalism and socialism." Both nationalism and socialism before 1848 were expressions of a liberal humanitarianism, but they changed after that in the hands of Napoleon, Bismarck, and Marx into an aggressive exclusiveness, "abandoning their early emphasis on the dignity of the individual for emphasis on the power of collectivities."

All this is brilliantly worked out by Professor Kohn. He is especially good in tracing out how the newer nationalisms, reacting against the rationalistic enlightenment of the Anglo-French west, took on an anti-rationalist tone. German nationalists became mystics, appealed to myths instead of rationalist discussion, developed a sense of a sacred mission against the individualist materialist west. Russian pan-Slavic nationalists went the Germans one better; and Professor Kohn's chapter explaining the fusion of world-revolutionary communism with Russian messianic nationalism is the best in the book.

But he thinks that the liberal individualism of the west is the most precious element in our inheritance. He agrees that everything that has happened recently has seemed to make against it. "The essential form of courage which has distinguished Western man seems to have become rare—the courage to think for oneself and to face fundamental issues without resort to infallible authority." Nevertheless, by the middle of the twentieth century our western civilization has proved itself resistant to fanatic ideologies. "Through this resistance there is a possibility that in the second half of the twentieth century the Western spirit of tolerance and compromise, of self-criticism and fair-minded objectivity, of reasonableness and individualism, may spread again as it did in the nineteenth century. Then in a new age of reason, an international society will be able to grow with emphasis on common human values and individual personal independence and not on national or class rights or on exclusive schemes of world salvation."

Of the four books listed here Professor Schlesinger's bears most directly on the immediate problems of Canadian socialists. He is a member of that organization, Americans for Democratic Action; and now that Norman Thomas's socialist party is so moribund as to be practically extinct, the ADA comes closest in the United States to the sort of thing that the CCF stands for in Canada. But he does not seek a specifically socialist party. He wants a union of all the non-communist left under a continuing dynamic experimental leadership like that of Franklin Roosevelt. (His Vital Center should really be called the Vital Left Center.) The famous Schlesinger book on *The Age of Jackson* voted for F.D.R. on every page. This volume is much more under the influence of Reinhold Niebuhr, and it is permeated by the Niebuhrian pessimism as to the limits of what can be accomplished by political action—a feature which makes it especially valuable as reading material for the naive and narrow-minded optimists who make up so much of the membership of the CCF. The bulk of the book is devoted

to a destructive analysis of the evil influence of the communist mirage upon the thinking of American liberals—and this also would seem to be something most useful for large numbers of CCFers.

"The degeneration of the Soviet Union taught us a useful lesson. It broke the bubble of the false optimism of the nineteenth century. Official liberalism<sup>†</sup> had long been almost inextricably identified with a picture of man as perfectible, as endowed with sufficient wisdom and selflessness to endure power and to use it infallibly for the general good. The Soviet experience, on top of the rise of Fascism, reminded my generation that man was, indeed, imperfect, and that the corruptions of power could unleash great evil in the world . . . Mid-twentieth century liberalism, I believe, has thus been fundamentally reshaped by the hope of the New Deal, by the exposure of the Soviet Union, and by the deepening of our knowledge of man. . . . We have no assurance that any solution is possible. The twentieth century has relieved us of the illusion that progress is inevitable. This age is straining at the capacities of man. At best it is an age of transition, at worst an age of catastrophe. Crisis will always be with us, in our lifetime . . . Man is not free; he is out on parole . . . Man is precious but not perfect. He is intoxicated by power, and hence most humane in a society which distributes power widely; he is intimidated by industrialism, and thus most secure in a society which will protect him from want and starvation. . . . We are forced back on the reality of struggle. Let us not sentimentalize the millennium by believing we can attain it through scientific discovery or through the revision of our economic system. Problems will always torment us. The good comes from the continuing struggle to try and solve them, not from the vain hope of their solution . . . The choice we face is not between progress without conflict and progress with conflict. It is between conflict and stagnation."

It seems to me that this sort of pessimistic liberalism is likely to be more inspiring to the generation that approaches the 1950's than is the easy optimism of most CCF literature and speeches. At any rate, everyone should read Professor Schlesinger's attack upon the toryism of the right and the fellow-travellerism of the left. And his analysis of the mind of a good communist is incomparably brilliant.

The author of the fourth book, *The Political Tradition of the West*, is now a professor of political science at McGill. Professor Watkins' book has been out for more than a year, but I hope it is not too late to say what an unexpected pleasure it is to find a Canadian political scientist who is interested in the ultimate questions of political faith.

His book is subtitled "A Study in the Development of Modern Liberalism." It is a history of how the modern pluralistic liberal society, with its fundamental distinction between the community and the state, has come about. Its theme is that since the Middle Ages, when the Church acted as the organized moral conscience of the community to impose limits upon the holders of military and political power, modern secularized society has had to find other instruments to control the state. He traces the contributions which have come from the commercial middle class, the landed aristocracy, and the industrial working class. He pauses a long time over Rousseau, in order to bring out the liberal aspect of Rousseau's "General Will" (the totalitarian aspect has been most obvious to our day); the general will formulates the moral consensus of the community just as the Church did in the Middle Ages. Modern liberalism operates with the conception of government as being legitimate when it rests on a general will formed by the free negotiation of conflicting points of view. It is essentially pluralistic. "The idea

of creating social order by free negotiation instead of by arbitrary fiat is incompatible with the conception of politics of the will of a single irresistible sovereign." So far the western tradition has proved strong enough to outlive the religious sanctions on which it originally rested, but its institutions of parliamentary democracy, the secular substitute for the old authority of the church, now suffer from the same loss of confidence which afflicted the Church at the end of the Middle Ages. Professor Watkins does not, however, suggest that we go back to organized religion as our method of controlling the state. His book is written for students, some of it is in very abstract language, and it assumes a considerable knowledge of history. But it would be hard to name a finer exposition of the essence of political liberalism.

The CCF National Council has announced a program of organization and education to occupy the next few years. This is as it should be, but I wish that they would put more emphasis on education than on organization. And I wish I could be sure that by education they did not mean propaganda, i.e., indoctrination of other people by people who themselves already know the truth. The real weakness of the CCF is that most CCFers need a lot of education themselves. And these four books provide some very good material with which to begin.

## The Hot Potato Case J. R. Mallory

(A Wholly Imaginary Incident)

Ottawa, Dec. 1—(Staff Special).

► THE SUPREME COURT OF CANADA by a majority decision today upheld the contention of the Dominion Government in the Hot Potato Case. Speculation that the decision would lead to a mass retirement of redundant civil servants could not be verified at a late hour. The Prime Minister, who was interviewed in the company of seven of his grandchildren, refused to comment on the situation. A notable feature of the case was the length of time which elapsed before it could be heard by the full court since at one time five of the judges were serving on various Royal Commissions of inquiry. The argument occupied six weeks, and five further weeks elapsed before the court handed down its decision.

The text of the decision follows:

The Chief Justice (Sir Loman Fluff): "This is an extraordinary case. It arose out of questions addressed to this Court by the Government of Canada in an order-in-council dated 3rd January, 1950. The questions were as follows:

"1. Is the Hot Potato Act, 1874, within the power of the Parliament of Canada to enact?

"2. If not, what portions of the Act are nevertheless valid?

"3. Are the orders, schedules and orders-in-council under the Emergency Powers Transition Acts within the power of the Parliament of Canada?

"4. If not, does the Parliament of Canada possess any power to deal with the subject of hot potatoes?

"Argument on the above questions was presented on behalf of the Attorney-General of Canada, the Attorney-Generals of the Provinces of New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Quebec.

"Briefly, the facts in the matter are these. Ever since 1874 the subject of hot potatoes has been the subject of legislation. The act of that year laid down certain general requirements regarding the temperatures above and below which potatoes could not be regarded as hot within the meaning of the act, and left the enforcement of this provision

<sup>†</sup>Remember that Americans unthinkingly use the word "liberalism" without any reference to the party of Mr. Mackenzie King.

December, 1949

to the office of the Registrar General of Benevolent Associations. This official was given the power to prosecute offenders under the act only when set in motion by a common informer.

"From that time until 1941 the subject of hot potatoes escaped further regulation. There do not appear to have been any prosecutions under the act, though this is not certain due to the absence of large portions of the records of the Registrar-General (an office which has been vacant since 1893). In any event, there are no reported cases dealing with the statute and this might almost be regarded as presumptive evidence that the act was not in fact enforced. However, the needs of a total war economy forced the government into issuing regulations dealing with hot potatoes. A large number of these orders were issued by the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, while several were issued (apparently in error, for they were quickly revoked) by the Department of Munitions and Supply.

"During the period between 1941 and 1945 a total of forty-five orders of various types were issued regulating the prices of hot potatoes, encouraging their production for export to the United States as part of the Hyde Park Agreement, and providing machinery for inspection and grading, as well as giving priority on labor in hot potato fields.

"It appears from the evidence that the hot potato had for some reason ceased to be an important part of the Canadian diet after 1920. Some attempt was made in the evidence to establish that this was related to the policy of the successive administrations of Mr. Mackenzie King. While this point was not conclusively established we are compelled to acknowledge that a short revival in the demand for hot potatoes did occur in the spring of 1935.

"However, wartime habit had made the hot potato an important part of the Canadian standard of living and after the cessation of hostilities the government continued, under the various transitional powers acts, to regulate the price and distribution of this product. Most of these controls were still in force early in the year at the time of the passing of the order-in-council referring the issue to this court.

"A precedent was created in the presentation of the argument. While the attorney-general for Canada did not himself put in an appearance before us, some conception of the gravity of the issue is given by the fact that the case for the Government of Canada was led by the Prime Minister in person. Associated with him were seven senior counsel who were either Cabinet Ministers or members of the Senate of Canada.

"The essence of the argument for the Government of Canada is that the Parliament of Canada has not, and never has had, the power to deal with the topic of hot potatoes. "I have sat on this court for thirty years, and I have often felt in the past that counsel for the Dominion Government have implied such an argument in similar cases. This is, however, the first time in my experience that a government has actually attempted to prove its want of jurisdiction. In the past they have sought this result in indirection, as it were. I welcome this unusual frankness since it greatly lightens the burden on this court in ascertaining what the government really wishes to establish."

"I need not recite the precedents which the learned Prime Minister adduced in support of his case. They are too familiar to us all. Suffice to say that he conspicuously omitted mentioning *Russell v. The Queen* and the *Ontario Temperance Federation Case*. The weight of argument he adduced was overwhelming and we are not sure whether it is worth while attempting to deal with the argument put up by the other parties who appeared before us.

"The Attorney-General of New Brunswick based his case on a somewhat unusual reading of Resolution 66 of the

Quebec Conference, in which he asserted that the hot potato was essential to the welfare of his province and that its cultivation was a condition of Confederation as far as the Maritime Provinces were concerned. He argued that this was one of the purposes for which the federal government had been set up and that, accordingly, there must be a valid basis for legislation on it by the Parliament of Canada. He was unable, however, to support this novel contention by reference to opinions of learned judges either in Canada or on the Privy Council, so that we did not feel it necessary to consider his argument.

"The Attorney-General of Prince Edward Island was even less able to conform to the rules of legal argument than his learned brother from New Brunswick. He attempted in vain, by the introduction of inadmissible interpretations of the motives of the Government of Canada and of this court in the Margarine Reference and in the Rental Reference, to establish that the present administration was attempting to subvert the constitution by defaulting its powers to the provinces. He pleaded with us to consider the unfortunate plight of a province such as his confronted suddenly with the problem of taking over at short notice all the existing federal powers.

"We were unable to attach any credence to this remarkable theory. Redundant as it may seem, we felt called upon to repeat again that the function of the courts is to deal with specific issues and not in any way to impose an interpretation on the constitution which is not borne out by its plain words.

"We were unable to make much of the submission of the Attorney-General for Quebec. He did not seem disposed to oppose the line of argument advanced by the Government of Canada. On the other hand, he attempted to make it clear that he in no way associated himself with the argument of the Attorney-General for Canada, whose submission, in his view, was tantamount to an attack on the autonomy of his province which should have been consulted before the matter was referred to the court. Since his argument, if we apprehend it correctly, does not raise any points of law relevant to the questions before us, we refrain from making any observations upon it.

"Our answers are accordingly:

"To Question 1: No.

"To Question 2: None.

"To Question 3: No.

"To Question 4: No."

(Five of the six remaining justices concurred in the judgment of the Chief Justice.)

The Sixth Judge, Mr. Justice Flaybanner, indicated his concurrence with the answers to the first three questions, but differed with regard to the fourth. On this matter he said:

"I am not satisfied that the subject of hot potatoes lies wholly outside the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Canada. Circumstances are conceivable, such as a climatic change involving the cultivation of hot potatoes in the Territories of Canada, and outside of existing provincial boundaries, in which some aspects of this problem might become a legitimate field for legislation by Parliament. But in that case the regulations would have to be framed with great care, and great caution exhibited in their administration. I hesitate to refer to *Russell v. The Queen*, but it seems to me that there must be occasions for the exercise of the power vested in Parliament by section 91, otherwise I fail to see for what purpose it was put in the act in the first place. However, since this condition seems very difficult to comply with I would hesitate, by way of *obiter dictum*, to say whether it would be valid."

## Canadian Folk Songs

*Edith Fowke*

PART II

► IT WAS not only the French who brought their native songs with them to Canada. English, Scottish, and Irish settlers, too, brought with them ballads from the old land. Folk songs survive best in isolated regions where there is not much contact with the outer world. The peninsula of Nova Scotia and the island of Newfoundland fulfilled this condition very well, and both have yielded a rich harvest to the folk-lore collector.

### Newfoundland

Elizabeth Bristol Greenleaf, whose *Ballads and Sea Songs of Newfoundland* is the most complete record of the songs of that island, tells how she went as a summer volunteer teacher for Dr. Wilfred Grenfell's mission to an isolated fishing village: "One night I came home from evening school and found the family as usual waiting up in the glow of the little wood-burning stove . . . Aunt Fanny Jane brought me a delicious pork bun and a glass of milk. While I was eating, Uncle Dan Endacott offered to sing me a song. I listened without particular interest, until it suddenly dawned upon me that he was singing a real folk song, one handed down by oral tradition. At college I had listened delightedly to ballads as I had heard them sung by the Fuller sisters, Professor John Lomax, and others, not expecting ever to hear them sung by one of the folk. From that night I never had a chance to be lonely or homesick, for I spent my leisure time listening to the songs and writing them down."

Another collector, Maud Karpeles, had accompanied Cecil Sharp when he made his famous collections in the Appalachian Mountains. He had planned to visit Newfoundland but died before the expedition took place. So Maud Karpeles herself made two visits to Newfoundland in the summers of 1929 and 1930, and noted some two hundred songs among the little outposts scattered around the winding coast. She described the reactions of the fishermen to her in these words: "My quest seemed a strange one to them, particularly when I had disposed of the idea that I was on the stage or the agent of a gramophone company. They were convinced that I should make a lot of money out of the songs. 'If I could learn to do that I should never have to do another day's fishing,' said one singer after I had written down his song and sung it back to him. However, they did not grudge me my supposed reward, or expect to share in it, and when once they saw that their songs were appreciated they were always ready to sing."

Miss Karpeles also gives this humorous description of the difficulties of the folk-song collector: "The folksinger does not, of course, distinguish between traditional and composed songs, and many is the time I have tracked down a singer with a great reputation for old songs only to be regaled with 'When You and I Were Young Maggie' or similar sentimental ditties. I had to explain that I wanted songs which had never been written down . . . In view of this explanation, a singer on coming to the end of his very big repertory of drawing-room songs, all of which I had rejected, remarked wearily, but sympathetically, 'Well, all I can think is that some other young lady must have come along before you and got all the songs printed off.'

### Nova Scotia

Perhaps the two most famous collections of Canadian folk songs are *Ballads and Sea Songs of Nova Scotia* by W. Roy Mackenzie, and *Songs and Ballads of Nova Scotia* by Helen Creighton. Mackenzie tells us that the ancient ballads which came to Nova Scotia with the Scottish settlers around 1800 "were in the main imported by the Scotch and preserved by

the French." The first Scottish settlers delighted in their native balladry, but later they adopted a more puritanical way of life and turned away from folk songs as smacking too much of this world. Fortunately by that time, says Mackenzie, "the best songs of Scotland were being sung by French neighbors of the men who were making up their minds to purge and live cleanly." These newcomers were Huguenots who "had suffered for the Protestant faith and lost little time in exchanging their French dialect for an English speech often savoring richly of the Highland lilt."

In the summer of 1929 Helen Creighton was collecting literary material in Nova Scotia when the Superintendent of Education suggested that she look for ballads. She thought the possibility of finding any was remote since until then she had never heard a ballad sung in her native province. However, she began to run across people who knew some of the old songs, and wherever she went people said: "Why don't you go over to Devil's Island and see Mr. Ben Henneberry? They'll sing you lots of songs over there." Finally she crossed to Devil's Island, with its seventeen houses inhabited by fisherfolk of English, Irish, and Welsh descent. This is her account of the first experience: "Here I heard folk singing as I have heard it neither before nor since. Picture the little island at your back . . . and the fishing boats rocking cosily in the soft cradle of the sea. . . . Far, far away is Citadel Hill at Halifax, very familiar but now seeming as part of a different world. . . . Behind Citadel Hill is the setting sun. All is quiet among the islanders save for the voice of Mr. Henneberry. His theme is the long sad story of 'Meagher's Children,' the tale of two little tots lost in the woods near Dartmouth. The island listeners all know the song and one feels that their hearts are throbbing for the little lasses who suffered so cruel a fate. One by one other islanders join the group, attracted by the beloved voice of Mr. Ben. Anon old Aunt Jane, perched upon a barrel, recalls a familiar phrase and then her high falsetto joins the deep bass of Mr. Henneberry. The air is tense and vibrant, for the ballad singer is an artist among his people, but upon this occasion the islanders are divided in thought between pleasure in hearing this dear old song again and pride in the one who is singing it. Often have I wished that I might repeat that precious moment."

One of the ballads which Mr. Henneberry sang was "The Courtship of Willie Riley," which runs to seventy-eight verses. It originated in Ireland, describing an event that occurred there toward the end of the eighteenth century.

Another of Mr. Henneberry's songs was "The Quaker's Courtship," which was imported from England. It's an answer-back type, in which the staid Quaker lover says:

"I've a ring and forty shillings,

but the maid has other ideas:

"I don't want your ring and money,

I want a young man to call me honey."

Still another of the old English songs is "The Farmer's Curse Wife." This legend is widely spread in Europe and the Orient as well as in Great Britain and America. It tells of the devil coming and carrying the farmer's bad-tempered wife away to hell. There she kicks out the brains of nine little devils who cry: "Take her away, daddy, or she'll kill us all." The devil then returns her to the farmer:

"Oh, here's your wife, she's not worth a curse,

She's been all through hell and she's ten devils worse."

An interesting song found in both Nova Scotia and Newfoundland is "The Bad Girl's Lament," which is quite similar to the better-known "Cowboy's Lament." It describes the fate of an old man's "fairest daughter, wrapped up in white linen as cold as the clay," who tells of her sad history:

**"Once on the street I used to look handsome  
Once on the street I used to dress gay,  
First to the ale house, then to the dance hall,  
Then to the poor house, and now to my grave."**

Nova Scotia has also produced an interesting variation on the familiar riddle songs, called "Captain Wedderburn's Courtship." In it the bold captain spies a young maiden and expresses his desire "to have that maid in bed with me, as she lay next the wall." The maiden's reply is: "Oh, before you lay one night with me you must answer my questions six:

What is rounder than a ring, what's higher than a tree?  
Oh, what is worse than woman's tongue, what deeper than  
the sea?

What tree buds first, and what bird sings best? Come  
answer my questions all

Before you lay one night with me at either stock or wall." When Captain Wedderburn solves all those riddles, the maiden demands "chickens without bones," "cherries without stones," and "a bird without a gall." When he produces those, she asks for "a silken gown a web that never went through," and "a priest unborn to join us one and all." Those two requests fulfilled, the captain directs: "So shake you up that old straw bed, you must lay next to the wall."

Bearing witness to their seafaring nature, both Nova Scotia and Newfoundland have produced many sailors' chanties, fishermen's songs, and ballads of shipwrecks or brave deeds upon the high seas. Perhaps the most entertaining of the sea songs is the one about the crocodile: a fabulous creature who was so big that:

"I bore away from the head one day with every stitch of  
sail,  
And going nine knots by the log, in ten months reached  
his tail."

### Central and Western Canada

Ontario and the west have produced no such rich store of folk songs as Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. However, Ontario has yielded a considerable stock of lumbering songs which spring from the days when great hordes of shanty boys were cutting their way through the great forests of Canada and the United States. Boundaries meant nothing to the lumbering men: they went wherever there were trees to be cut and wages to be earned. Songs, too, knew no boundaries, and the songs that originated in the forests of Maine were soon being sung in the northern wilds of Ontario. Songs that originated in Canada, too, found their way across the United States.

The most famous of all lumbering songs, "The Jam on Gerry's Rock," celebrates the bravery of "six Canadian shanty boys" and the tragic death of "their foreman, young Monroe." Although the incident on which the song is based is generally thought to have happened in Maine, the authorities believe that the song itself was written by a Canadian. One of the reasons given is that it displays a typically Canadian regard for the Sabbath: one line runs: "For to go to work on Sunday they did not think it right."

The ballad of "Jim Whalen" originated in Ontario, and describes the death of a Canadian lumberjack on the Mississippi in 1878. "The Hanging Limb" tells of another Canadian who was killed by a falling limb in Michigan. Beginning with the traditional "Come all ye".

Beginning with the traditional "Come all ye":  
"Come all ye sons of Canada wherever you may be,  
And listen to my tale of woe and mark it in Fort Knell,"  
it goes on to warn:  
"And do not leave your own dear homes, but by your  
parents stand;  
And if you're forced to look for work steer clear of  
Michigan."

A gayer lumberjack song is "Ye Maidens of Ontario," in which the lumberjack complains that Ontario girls pay too much attention to the farmer boys who stay at home while the lumbermen are braving dangers in the woods, and concludes with the description of how Quebec girls welcome them when they leave the camps in the spring:

"Oh, when we get down to Quebec town the girls they dance with joy.

Says one unto another one, 'Here comes a shanty boy.'

"One will treat us to a bottle and another to a dram,  
While the toast goes round that table for the jolly shanty  
man."

On the prairies the most famous folk song is "The Red River Valley," which was imported from the States. Other common folk songs such as "Old Dan Tucker," "Billy Boy," "Froggie Went A-Courtin'," "Old King Cole," and "Frankie and Johnnie" are fairly widely sung, but no collector has uncovered a store of ballads to compare with those of eastern Canada.

From western Canada one interesting folk song has turned up. Marius Barbeau quotes "I Never Shall Forget," from southern British Columbia. It is in the tradition of the "great historical bum" who worked in the Garden of Eden and built the pyramids, but has a truly Canadian flavor:

" 'Twas I who built the Rockies up  
And placed them where they are,  
Sold whiskey to the Indians  
Behind my little bar.

'Twas I that made Niagara Falls and first discovered  
beer.

Oh, that was long before Columbus landed over here." Today the radio and the movies have largely displaced folk songs as a means of entertainment, and there is danger that the songs which our forefathers preserved through many generations of loneliness and hardship will die out. If they do our country will be poorer, for the old songs were vibrant with life, and many of them had a haunting beauty. On Canadian radio programs such singers as Ed McCurdy, Merrick Jarrett, and Allan Mills are trying to reawaken an interest in folk songs generally, and perhaps in time more Canadians will come to know and love their native folk songs. Those who are interested in the subject might start by writing to the National Museum of Canada in Ottawa for a copy of the little song book, "Come A-Singing," which gives thirty representative Canadian folk songs.

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# O CANADA

Governor-General Alexander's aide-de-camp ate lunch alone Saturday. He was the unlucky 13th in the official party . . . of University of Western Ontario, where his excellency received the degree of doctor of laws and officially opened the new Thames Hall Building. Rather than have 13 persons at the table and perhaps upset some of the guests, the official party decided the aide-de-camp was dispensable . . . (St. Thomas Times Journal).

Along with his professional interests Dr. Cullen, as a responsible citizen, took a prominent part in civic affairs, especially matters pertaining to public health. One of his projects was to get the authorities to clean up Chesapeake Bay where the contamination from sewage disposal was ruining the oyster.

(Book Review in The St. Catharines Standard).

Poor teaching of history in Canadian schools paves the way for antipathy and prejudice, Hon. Ernest Rinfret, Postmaster-General warned . . . He did not suggest correction of historical facts, but simply the establishment of a uniform textbook, whether in the Province of Quebec, in Ontario or in the Western Provinces.

(Montreal Daily Star).

Fingerprinting of Oakville taxi drivers will be discontinued. Police Chief John B. Derry had been making fingerprinting mandatory . . . Councillor Robert Freeman felt the Chief's decision was not entirely unjustified.

Fingerprinting never troubles the innocent. These men are driving our wives."

(Globe and Mail).

"Look at this bird," said show manager W. H. Gooderham. "It is slick looking, it is in good health, but . . ." There was an ominous silence. "It has four spots." Mr. Gooderham explained: "The perfect show budgie should have three distinct black spots." Why three spots? "That is the number established by the British budgie judges." Why do the British favor three spots? "It is the established number," was the dignified response. (Globe and Mail).

Take your materials to your base headquarters—then go to the Recreation Hall at 1456 Gerrard St. East for celebration.

(Instructions to CCF scrutineers in Greenwood bye-election).

The president of the Dominion Property Owners' Association told members of the Ottawa Property Owners' Association last night that "the attitude of those decrying rental increases was immoral."

(Ottawa Evening Citizen).

One day last week I saw a much more effective weapon against the menace of Communism than talk. It is Glenierin, convalescent home for the employees of the Robert Simpson Co. It is symbolic of a benevolent, paternal capitalistic system wherein the health and welfare of the employee are of direct concern to the employer . . . As long as these kinds of human and humane relations exist in our capitalistic way of life, who fears Communism?

(Margaret Aitken in The Toronto Telegram).

This month's prize of a six months' subscription goes to A. C. Askew, St. Thomas, Ont. All contributions should contain original clipping, date and name of publication.

## Twenty-five Years Ago

Vol. 5, No. 51, December, 1924, *The Canadian Forum*.

It is perhaps one of the foibles of the East to point with amusement to hare-brained schemes for the expenditure of public funds which constantly are being hatched in the country west of the Great Lakes. The Hudson Bay Railway, in the opinion of most, is a classic example of this sort. Recently, however, there have been two amazing proposals advanced in Alberta which, in point of impracticability, far exceed the wildest flights of anything hitherto recorded. The first is a scheme of William Irvine, M.P. for East Calgary, for the elimination of droughts in South Alberta. He would dam all the rivers and inundate a tenth of the area of the province. This, in his opinion, would make it rain. The second is sponsored by the Bassano *Mail*, which considers that Mr. Irvine's scheme is not without merit, but would not be nearly as certain of bringing results as if a strip of the Rocky Mountains were levelled and the clouds permitted to come eastward from the Pacific.

(From "On Parliament Hill.")

## Money in the Bank

### Robert Fontaine

(SHORT STORY)

► BELINDA LOOKED at the great pink piggy bank that her little daughter had been given for Christmas. There must have been at least fifty dollars in that bank. At least.

Betsy's daddy was always putting money in it, for one. You could ask him for a few dollars for a new slip or something and he would complain but he was always sliding a folded bill into Betsy's bank.

"Why are you filling the child's bank with money? How is a four-year-old girl going to spend all that money?" Belinda asked once. Betsy's daddy just smiled that easy, knowing smile that poised people have, really an irritating smile if you're a bit nervous yourself . . . well, he just smiled and said:

"She isn't always going to be four. Someday she's going to college, I hope."

Imagine that! Everyone should stop spending money on necessities so Betsy's college education could be assured. Really! She wasn't even in kindergarten yet!

Charles had that peculiar assured, long-distance viewpoint. It was very helpful to him. Whenever he did anything that was wrong by ordinary standards he always said you had to take the long view of it. He was very sensual, for instance. It wasn't a thing anyone mentioned, but he just was. You might say, well, lusty. And he would always excuse it. Always. He called it "earthy" and said it was necessary for people to feel a closeness to the earth and to animals and to growth and creation now and then. People needed to balance off the fact that they lived mostly in a world of their mind.

Naturally, it was just plain masculine appetite and Charles was just smart enough to make it sound so poetic and all. Charles could probably find anything poetic. It was a very convenient arrangement . . . for Charles.

Belinda looked at the pink piggy-bank again. Then she looked at the photo of Charles on Betsy's small bureau. Really, he was a very handsome fellow. Everybody said he was handsome. But, after all, it's an accident that a person is handsome. He just happens to be born that way. Handsome or not, there was, even in the picture, that quiet, poised smile that told you he would never get ruffled unless there was some high moral issue involved. It was all there in his face, a face that would look calm and pleasant and intelligent to most people . . . people, that is, who didn't know . . . well, for instance, Charles' "earthiness."

Belinda picked the bank up and it was very heavy. She shook it but it was so full of bills it didn't rattle. Betsy opened her eyes and Belinda put the bank down quickly and pretended to be dusting it.

"Daddy home yet?" Betsy said sleepily.

"No, dear, go back to sleep." Betsy yawned and went back to sleep.

Belinda took the bank out in the kitchen and tried to open it but she couldn't. At length, furious and impatient, she broke it with a hammer. She broke it into so many little pieces that she had trouble finding them.

After she cleared up most of the pieces so Charles wouldn't see them, she counted the money. There was sixty-two dollars there. Imagine that! Sixty-two dollars in a baby's bank. It was wrong. It was indecent for a child who didn't need it to have so much money.

Belinda folded the bills and slipped them into a purse. Then she swept the floor once and waited for Charles.

He came home after a while and she tried to keep him out of the kitchen. She kept worrying that he would see a

piece of the broken bank on the floor or some place. She was sure she had found every little last piece, but, still, you never could tell.

Charles didn't care. He sensed that she wanted him out of the kitchen and he stayed out. He was really indifferent to the matter. Nor did he notice the bank was gone from Betsy's room. At least he didn't mention it.

The next day she went downtown and bought the hat. It was fur-trimmed and made her look very elegant. She kept looking in mirrors all the way home.

When she got home she put the hat away in the back of a bureau drawer. She would never dare wear it when Charles was around. He'd want to know where she got it and how she obtained the money and then he would hit the ceiling and deliver a self-righteous lecture about stealing and so forth.

The idea came to her again that maybe she had not swept up every piece of the broken bank, so she hastened into the kitchen and got down on her knees and went over every square inch of the room. She looked behind the stove and under the sink and everywhere. She found nothing.

Charles came home and he was very pleasant and still did not mention the bank. In fact several weeks went by and he did not mention the bank. Belinda thought perhaps he had forgotten about it. She was not sure though, and every spare moment she had she spent making one more search through the kitchen to make sure there were no fragments of the broken bank about.

After a while it began to wear on her. She kept feeling an urge to keep looking and looking and looking through the kitchen for fragments. Presently she extended her search to the living room and the bathroom. She felt as if some dark voice was whispering in her ear: "There might be a piece dragged into the bathroom . . . or the dining-room. Maybe it caught in your shoe. Maybe . . ."

So she searched and searched. It seemed as if her whole day came to be made up of searching for fragments of the broken bank. Meanwhile Charles began to eye her suspiciously. That is, he began to inquire about her health. He thought she looked drawn and tired and worried.

When he asked her about it she snapped at him that she was perfectly all right, but if they had a maid she certainly could take a rest once in a while and not spend every hour of the day cleaning and cooking.

Charles said mildly that he did not think the small house required that much work. He smiled and his voice was kind when he said it. Belinda was angry at the fact that he did not appreciate how much work she did.

She began to argue and then, overcome with anger and confusion she went in the bedroom and locked the door. After that she locked the door of her bedroom every night for several weeks. Charles did not say anything. He slept on the divan in the living-room and told her she had better see a doctor, her nerves were getting the best of her.

The last time he told her that she told him that if her nerves were bad it was he who had caused it with his constant demands and his earthiness.

Charles smiled and reminded her that it was almost a month that she had been sleeping behind a locked door.

This confused and angered Belinda so that she shook all over and became frightened.

The next day when she was sure Charles had gone to work she decided she really would consult a psychiatrist. There was one in the next block, a good-looking young man named Sertz. People spoke very highly of him.

She put on her best clothes and the hat she had bought with the bank money and stopped into Betsy's room on her way out.

Belinda nearly fainted when she saw a bank, identical to the one she had broken, standing there on the bureau. She nervously lifted it up and it felt just as heavy, in fact almost exactly as heavy as the other one.

She began to think she was a little mad. Hastily she went out of the house and around the block.

Dr. Sertz was very pleasant. He was gentle and soft-spoken and he listened to her sympathetically as she told him about the bank and how it had come to get on her nerves and so on.

The doctor just chuckled and said: "Well, really, you have no reason to feel particularly guilty. The child is yours and legally her money is yours. Morally, it is part of your share in the family's possessions. I really don't see any need to feel particularly racked about it. Is that the first time you ever worried about such a matter?"

"Certainly."

"Well, there is no reason for it."

Belinda spoke desperately. "But you see, I stole it. I'm not thief. Not really, but I stole it."

"Well, someday you can give it back to her. Besides you expend labor and time on her care. You can make a case for yourself in that respect."

"But stealing is against the law. I stole. I'm thief."

"My dear woman, I am not concerned with the law. The law is for the protection of property and civil rights. I am interested in protecting the individual against himself. If you took money from your child you will pay it back. If you don't pay it back in coin you will pay it back some way."

"But, doctor, I feel I am a thief, a horrible, dishonest woman. An abnormal woman. Abnormal, really, is the word. Why, I go hunting all day for pieces of the broken bank for fear Charles will find one. I spend all my time doing that."

The doctor smiled. "You've developed an anxiety complex about it. You're under a compulsion to straighten everything and clean everything to compensate. But it will all disappear if you simply tell your husband you took the money because you needed a hat. You have a perfect legal and moral right to a hat."

"No, you don't understand, doctor. I could never do that."

The doctor looked at her a long time and then he said calmly:

"You don't love your husband, Mrs. Masters, and you're trying to excuse it by feigning a psychopathic condition that doesn't exist. You've found a way to avoid your husband by making yourself too tired and too nervous to, well . . . function as wife, shall I say?"

Belinda rose angrily. "I never heard such nonsense. I never in my life heard such ridiculous nonsense. I didn't come here to discuss sex, believe me!"

The doctor rose slowly and smiled, mildly amused. As she walked out the door he said: "I'm quite sure you didn't."

When she got home she was a nervous wreck. She felt a wild impulse to break the new bank only Charles came in as she was thinking about it.

"Where did this come from?" she demanded before he even got his hat and coat off.

"I bought it. When I saw the other was gone. I thought perhaps the janitor or the cleaning woman or someone had swiped the other."

"You didn't think I took it, I suppose," Belinda said with hysterical defiance.

"No," Charles said simply, "I didn't."

"Well, then don't look at me that funny way."

"I'm looking at you the way I always do."

Belinda snorted. "You're looking at me in that gentle, poised, sweet way that you always use to cover your feelings when you really hate me."

"Don't be absurd," Charles said gently. "I don't hate you at all. I love you."

"Of course you hate me. You think I'm a thief and . . . I can't stand it!"

She rushed, crying, to her room and locked the door.

Charles stood dazed and saddened for a few moments and then he went into the kitchen. He felt the need of a big, hot cup of coffee, so he picked up the large mug he rarely used, the one that sat on the window sill.

As he went to pour the coffee he noticed a large pink fragment at the bottom of the cup. It had a small blue forget-me-not on it and it looked like it might have bounced into the cup when someone had broken a piggy-bank.

## On the Air

*Allan Sangster*

► CBC WEDNESDAY NIGHT, after a moderately severe summer slump, seems to have pulled up its network and returned to its original purpose of providing stimulating and thought-provoking entertainment.

Notable for these qualities were two half-hour talks by one Shaun Herron, an Irishman, who certainly knows what he likes and does not mind exhibiting the rough side of his tongue in telling about it, and who, by the same token, doesn't seem to care about winning friends so long as he influences people. No true disciple of Dale Carnegie he.

On November second Mr. Herron spoke on The Spirit of Irish Poetry; on the ninth his subject was The Spirit of English Poetry. Taking a lesson from his own manner, I shall say at once that while I found Mr. Herron's discourses pontifical, arrogant, and on occasion presumptuous, I have to admit that they were interesting, vigorous, overflowing with a rude vitality.

Undismayed by the invidiousness of comparison, Mr. Herron said in so many words that E. J. Pratt was not, as many supposed, Canada's Greatest Poet, but that A. M. Klein was. He trode hard on the toes of Lister Sinclair, stating flatly that Mr. Sinclair was given to sounding off on subjects with which he was not competent or equipped to deal, at the same time implying without the least trace of false modesty that there was no subject whatsoever on which he (Mr. Shaun Herron) was not better equipped than anyone to give an opinion whose soundness it would be arrant presumption to question.

Having thus established himself in our regard, Mr. Herron got back to his announced subjects and unburdened himself of many interesting though not necessarily original ideas. Some of them so wrong as to be fantastic. He also read—very well, too, in his rough and earthy Irish voice—some well-chosen poetry. It was interesting to note that while at the beginning of his first talk Mr. Herron was, to use an expression which would have come trippingly from his tongue, beating the bejesus out of Mr. Sinclair, towards the end of that same talk he was giving tongue to ideas very similar to some which Mr. Sinclair had expressed (and just as well, too) in the most recent issue of *Here and Now*.

Obviously no one had made Mr. Herron privy to the Canadian conventions respecting criticism; he had not been told that here a spade is never called a spade, or even a shovel, but rather: an instrument which under some circumstances is suited to, and by some persons actually used for, the removal of a substance which is not infrequently found underfoot in fields. If Mr. Herron can only be kept from

respecting this convention, from adopting our Canadian critical circumlocutions (and I suspect that he can be), then the CBC should certainly ask him back. Such a virtuoso performance, such straight talk—provocative, interesting and informed—is heard too seldom on our networks.

Listening on another Wednesday night to Andreyev's *The Seven Who Were Hanged*, one could not escape these convictions: that no one has ever beaten the Russians at the concoction of flamboyantly grim drama; that no one in this country can beat Len Peterson as a radio adapter if he has an original which appeals to him; that Esse Ljungh, when at the top of his form as he obviously was in *The Seven*, is as good a dramatic producer-director as we have, not excepting Andrew Allan. The difference (as I see it), the thing which gives Mr. Allan the edge, is the uniformity of his work; he always seems to be at or near the top of his form, while Mr. Ljungh does not.

Lou Applebaum, who composed and conducted the music for this production, is a radio composer and conductor who takes second place to no one, including Lucia Agostini. Apt, evocative, fitting the mood and spirit of the play as a ship the water, Mr. Applebaum's music and his collaboration with Mr. Ljungh in placing and keeping it always within the frame of the production, so that it supported and carried, instead of obtruding itself as a thing apart, was one of the splendors of a very splendid production. Having heard this show, I suggest that Mr. Allan and Mr. Agostini re-examine some of *their* collaborations and the music for some recent Stage productions. Perhaps they could agree upon some small subordination of the music to the purposes of the whole production, at least to the point where it does not destroy the mood by jumping out and biting the listener.

\* \* \*

Citizens' Forum, from Winnipeg on November third (the second of this season's Forums) essayed to discuss "How Should Our Children be Taught About Sex?" Citizens' Forum could and should be a noble figure in the program schedule; too often it has been but a weak and spineless sister. Never, however, has this reviewer heard it descend to such depths of fumbling futility as on this occasion. Confronted by the appalling monster of sex, having actually to talk out loud about it, not only before all those people but before those dreadful open microphones, the members of the forum gave tongue to more epoch-making nothings than I have ever heard on a supposedly adult program.

As, for example, when someone asked "What happens when a parent gives an embarrassed answer to an embarrassing question?" There was the whole root of the matter, but not one participant had the commonsense or the courage to say so, to point out that the very first answer to "How Should Our Children be Taught About Sex?" is a general mental attitude which admits of no such thing as an embarrassing question. These discussers were obviously much more concerned about maintaining the old taboos than about getting down to cases and saying anything helpful. A most useful reference for them all, and for everyone interested in the subject, would be Margaret Mead's *Male and Female*, recently condensed in *The Ladies' Home Journal* and now available in book form.

Nothing is more inescapable than the fact that a considerable percentage of our young people are having, and will continue to have, pre-marital sexual contacts, and the acceptance of that fact is the only certain way to enlightened and enlightening methods of sex education. We can say that young people should not be that way; we can pretend that they really are not that way—and this is just what we have been doing for many hundreds of years, getting nowhere. Deaf but vigorous Nature (human nature included)

has no ears for our moral prating, no discernible morals whatever. She has one purpose only, the perpetuation of the race; to this end she goes on driving young men and women together. And we, knowing that this happens, insist that our children and adolescents shall confront the inevitable struggle as ill-equipped as possible with knowledge and caution, so that we are steadily confronted with the tragedies of "ruined" girls, illegitimate children, forced and mismatched marriages.

Was there any recognition of this fact on Citizens' Forum, any mention of it, however tentative? Not a vestige nor an iota; the whole program was, one might imply, full of sound, no fury but in the minds of listeners, certainly signifying nothing.

I can remember Citizens' Forums in which there was clear thinking and plain speaking; sometimes even a good deal of vigorous, entertaining, hammer-and-tongs discussion. Most of those good ones were, it seems, in the days when an able, full-time chairman and producing crew worked steadily on the show, and I think the CBC should revert to that system. Perhaps there were some disadvantages, in that the programs were always colored by the chairman's personality, but this was by no means as deadly as the dullness which is now apparent.

\* \* \*

Arthur L. Phelps is back on the air—Fridays, 7.30 p.m. E.S.T., Trans-Canada—in a series of talks called *The Two Islands*. To my mind Professor Phelps is unquestionably the best broadcaster in the country, not only for the quality and honesty of his thinking but for the manner of its presentation. Let's hope that this time the CBC hangs on to him and makes it worth his while to continue to broadcast.

## Film Review

*D. Mosdell*

► EVEN THE GENIUS, no doubt, has his blind spots—areas where his insight suffers a sudden eclipse, and he is betrayed into talking like a fool. Disney, for example, has been talking like a fool for so long now that most of us have almost forgotten the time when a new Disney film was an event. Somebody even wrote a book about him, and there were precious few of us who demurred seriously at calling him a genius, with or without the qualifying adjective *minor*. Disney is not, and never has been, a subtle man or a complex one; but he was quick and observant, satiric on a very obvious plane, a master of animal movement, and from the very beginning immensely competent at a complicated craft which for all practical purposes he had himself invented. Looking back on his career from the nadir which he has now reached, it is easy to discount his earlier success and claim that we always knew he was horribly sentimental and vulgar, completely devoid of taste, and a second or even third-rate artist.

It is true that there were always large areas in which Disney showed himself incompetent, irrelevant, and immaterial. But in his best work, the very early *Silly Symphonies*, *Dumbo*, which has had a recent box-office success after lying fallow for some years, and *The Reluctant Dragon*, easily his most delightful full-length production (remember? there was a longish introduction and epilogue graced by Robert Benchley), he managed to avoid the twin pitfalls of Love and comic-book brutality. The results were uniformly satisfying—amusing stories, full of intricate and careful detail, the consistent Disney tempo, and whole patterns of color and sound (particularly in *Dumbo*) which were both complementary to the story and the situations and exciting

in themselves, indicating the direction which other less commercially minded film-artists were to follow and explore.

In the long run Disney's faults completely swamped his talent. For one thing, his ingenuity failed to supply the immense demands he made on it, and his later productions show distinct signs of slip-shod work and imaginative poverty; and for another, he unfortunately shares with the great American public a deplorable taste for sentimentality and the worst clichés of June-moon love-dove mawkishness. The lack of taste which was discernible in parts of *Snow White* reached a new low in *Ichabod and Mr. Toad*. What happened to Irving's material was bad enough, since Disney is no better than he ever was at drawing human beings; still, the *Legend of Sleepy Hollow* does allow for a certain amount of horseplay. But what he did to Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows* was unforgivable—the story thinned and vulgarized, the subtleties of character in Toad and Mole and Badger completely blotted out, and the settings, which the earlier Disney could have made enchanting, crude in color and design—settings indeed for a Popeye the Sailor cartoon, but outrageously wrong for Kenneth Grahame. As my companion said bitterly, "I am done with Disney." Two days later, however, we saw *Seal Island*, Disney's technicolor semi-documentary on a seal colony in the Outer Hebrides, and agreed that perhaps Disney has found a way out—and an infinitely less painful one for his audiences. Disney is no Flaherty, of course, and *Seal Island* suffers badly by comparison with the superb *Louisiana Story*; but it is well worth seeing. A decent box-office reception might even conceivably encourage Disney's new departure, and deter him from committing further mayhem on children's classics.

As a rule, historical or costume movies are about equal in their soporific effect to the average run of Westerns. This is partly because moving-picture actors can so seldom act, and partly because motion picture writers are a poor lot who find it difficult to cope with their own century, let alone a past one. This year so far there have been two reasonably successful attempts to recreate the past: *Queen of Spades* and *Uncle Silas*; the first from a story by Pushkin, and the second from Sheridan LeFanu. Neither of them is a really first-rate film, but both of them do succeed in spots in creating the illusion of people who not only do not look like ourselves, dressed for a masquerade, but do not think or speak like us either. (This is an effect which many movies set in the twentieth century achieve quite easily, but not usually on purpose).

*Queen of Spades* is melodramatic in the Russian manner, and in spite of its English actors with their broad-A accents, does manage to create a Russian-novel atmosphere. Its only real fault, in fact, is that its sound-effects man has been allowed to run hog-wild, with his ticking clocks that stop to underline the old Countess's death from fright, and the swish and tap of her skirts and cane in the haunting of her murderer; the total effect of which is to diminish rather than heighten the suspense.

*Uncle Silas*, on the other hand, recreates the rather stagey but in its own terms effective atmosphere of a Wilkie Collins novel, which is melodrama of the distinctly nineteenth-century English type. The story of the frail but surprisingly hardy pre-Victorian heroine in the clutches of her wicked uncle and his blackguard son and her rescue by the handsome young lord holds few surprises as far as the plot is concerned; but it has a certain literary charm and is extremely well-directed; in fact, the night I saw it the audience actually applauded the hero and hissed the villain and in no spirit of mockery at that. You could travel a lot further and fare worse than to see either of them.

## Recordings

*Milton Wilson*

► A FUNDAMENTAL SUPERIORITY of the major artist is his unpredictable variety. The minor artist, your Rimsky-Korsakov, or Delius, or even Bloch, works one vein to death; he is continually rewriting himself, with varying degrees of success. But a Shakespeare and a Beethoven allow within themselves such apparently irreconcilable poles as *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *King Lear* or the *Eighth Symphony* and the *Ninth*. Accordingly, for the man who finds the monumental or defiant Beethoven wearing thin, or has had his fill of the later fugues, the contemplative "mystical" slow movements, or the wantonly energetic scherzos, there is still the relaxed, lazy, diffuse Beethoven, who, for me, often seems to wear best of all. Among early works the *Quintet in C* is a superb example of this Beethoven, as is the interminable *Pastoral Symphony*, or even the first movement of the *Violin Concerto*. And Victor has recently released a recording by the Paganini Quartet of the *Razumovsky Quartet No. 1*, whose first movement is the masterpiece of them all. The main theme is undistinguished except by sheer casualness, a sort of unpretentious saunter; and the whole movement, whatever its formal precision, has an air of dawdling movement almost as outrageous as the sprawling ease of the slow movement in the *Pastoral*. It is the mood of Wordsworth's *Matthew* poems. Even the scherzo spends much of its time hopping about on one foot in a display of pointless energy, and the slow movement grieves luxuriously. The performance by the Paganini Quartet is one of the best I have ever heard, both for precision and for sheer beauty of sound. Victor are to be congratulated on a recording that fully captures this superb performance.

Victor's recording of the Schubert *Symphony No. 9* by Toscanini and the NBC Symphony is not too recent, but ought to be mentioned here, even if late. Toscanini's version of the first and last movements is the best I know, full of strength and momentum, and the recording is excellent. In the second and third movements I have a preference, sentimental no doubt, for the more relaxed and spacious Bruno Walter performance in an earlier Victor set (602). Toscanini is a bit too ruthless here for my taste, although his logic is compelling.

The organ music of the past century or so (what I have heard of it) is, with some minor exceptions, pretty dismal stuff. Why the 19th century should have been fatal to organists I don't know, unless the expansion of the orchestra had something to do with it. At any rate, I looked into the new Columbia album of fairly recent French organ music with a minimum of hope. The contents (by Widor, Vierné, Boellman, Alain and Dupré) were better than average, but the level of invention or even technical originality was still low. Most pleasant, perhaps, were the *Antiphon II* of Dupré and the *Litanies* of Alain. E. Power Biggs performs with his usual facility and the recording is brilliant, if a little confused.

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

J. R. MALLORY is with the department of political science, McGill University . . . We are glad to welcome back STELLA HARRISON, of London, England, whose "Letters from London" was one of our regular features from September, 1946, to June, 1948.

## CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor: The article by L. Freeman, entitled "Dr. Hunter's Dismissal," in your October issue, contains so many misstatements that I feel some correction is necessary.

It is surprising that an action which seems to be generally approved in the University of Alberta and the City of Edmonton should be the subject of adverse criticism by Toronto people who have no authentic information about it. The critics show the weakness of their case most clearly when they venture upon statements which appear to be factual but are almost invariably wrong. Here are examples of statements in Mr. Freeman's article:

*Statement* (with respect to a 1946 incident): "The usual procedure for dealing with such disputes, the appointment of an *ad hoc* committee for the Faculty Relations Committee, was not followed at that time. Instead, the president asked certain member of the faculty to prepare a report of the dispute . . ."

*Fact*: The usual *ad hoc* committee report (and no other) was requested and received by the President. The committee recommended drastic action which, however, the Board postponed indefinitely.

*Statement* (with respect to a 1949 incident): "Seventeen members of a class of over two hundred, induced by skillful propagandists, submitted a sworn statement to the president reporting the incident."

*Fact*: The spontaneous outburst of resentment in Dr. Hunter's class, during his final lecture, and the immediate protests to the president's office, are sufficient evidence that no propaganda was used or required. All these protests were rejected, because not in writing. The students were on the eve of a three-week final examination period, and not until this was over and most of the students had gone home did those who were still around the campus get down to the business of putting their complaint in writing. The statement was not sworn.

*Statement*: "The wording of this (students') statement is curiously reminiscent of the wording of the letter from the Board of Governors to Dr. Hunter in 1940."

*Fact*: No letter was sent by the Board of Governors to Dr. Hunter in 1940.

*Statement*: "This meeting dismissed Dr. Hunter from the faculty, giving him forty-eight hours to vacate his office . . ."

*Fact*: Dr. Hunter's dismissal took effect June 30, and he had the free use of his office till he left town about the end of July.

*Statement*: "Since 1941 . . . the machinery for converting the university into a purely political body (in which appointments are based on political patronage and dismissals are a form of party discipline) has been consolidated fully as effectively as the machinery which Huey Long established to control the University of Louisiana."

*Fact*: There is not a vestige of truth in this statement, as Mr. Freeman or any other person could easily ascertain by inquiring of any member of our university staff.

As one of the original members of Convocation, and now for some years its Chancellor (an elective office), I am fully acquainted with the development of the university and its constitution, and can testify unreservedly that political interference, patronage, or pressure of any sort have never appeared in any shape or form. Even the statement in *Saturday Night* that, "The Alberta staff appears to have tolerated a regulation forbidding the expression of political opinions in instructional periods," is groundless. No such regulation has been needed, since in the history of the university no staff member other than Dr. Hunter has exceeded the bounds of propriety so far as to cause pro-

tests by students. To avoid misunderstanding, I should add that these protests were only a minor contributing factor in Dr. Hunter's dismissal.

Mr. Freeman's further suggestion that Dr. Hunter's dismissal resulted from a witch hunt by Social-Credit elements among the students is as baseless as his accusation of political patronage in the university. The students who signed the protest were a cross-section of Dr. Hunter's class, not connected with any political group.

Surely the Toronto group which has become agitated over this question has been slow to realize that a university has the right and duty to terminate the services of a man who has become increasingly unsatisfactory over a period of years, and that no useful purpose would be served by a public analysis of the numerous and various causes of dissatisfaction.

*G. Fred McNally, Chancellor, University of Alberta.*

The Editor: In your November issue, Mr. Beder tries to explain his disillusion with Russian bolshevism and his refusal to accept the policies of social-democracy. He neatly finds both virtues and faults in both parties, and looks forward to a synthesis of the virtues without the faults.

A highly desirable outcome, indeed; but are his particular analyses correct? In regard to the parties he calls "communist," he repeatedly states or implies that they possess the absolute and complete truth about "economic laws" and "historical development." This is an unwarranted assumption. Marx's fundamental tenets are not above questioning; in fact, there is abroad a very strong suspicion that they were derived from an obscurantist philosophy rather than from an honest study of economics or history.

Now if "communist" theory regarding economic production is based on fallacies, that would be reason enough why they do not work out in practice, and why they require the apparatus of police repression to force them upon the masses. Thus the "quality" of these so-called communists which Mr. Beder does not like ("ruthless suppression of human rights") follows inevitably upon their other "quality" which he does approve—their possession of "economic reality," i.e., dogmatic assumption.

As for the social-democrats: Is it true that they are interested only in promoting the social services, consequently disregarding the problems of economic balance, world markets, and so on? If so, there is no explanation of the British Labor Government's nationalization of coal-mining and their present determination to nationalize the iron and steel industries. . . . Surely it is a realistic concern with economic balance which accounts for the success of Sweden's social-democrats, and it is only fair to grant Britain's Labor Party a few more than their present four years in office before condemning them to failure. . . . Perhaps Mr. Beder, despite himself, has been taking the headlines in the capitalistic press too seriously?

*G. McLure, Westmount, P.Q.*

The Editor: Mr. E. A. Beder, in his analysis of socialist trends in your November number, accepts uncritically the standard Left Wing apologia for the present difficulties of the British socialist government—to the effect that the problem which faced that administration was the difficult one of reducing the standard of living of British workers, to compensate for the loss of British overseas investments. This is entirely incorrect.

Dr. D. B. Marsh, in your previous issue, pointed out that British receipts from these investments were £205 million in 1938; £162 million in 1948. The diminution of this income is a negligible factor in the present British difficulties. British balance of payment troubles result from a complex of causes. Between the two wars Britain neglected her over-

seas commercial interests in favor of attempts to create an increase in the standard of living by experiments in social security. During the Second World War Britain atoned for this error, by bearing an undue share of the war effort, and suffered great physical destruction, and extreme exhaustion of her people. After victory the world refused to go back to the free interchange of goods which is only possible when there is no state planning of commerce, and, in particular, a free market in which to interchange currencies. In addition, Britain has made a hopeless attempt to liquidate so-called war "debts," representing the cost to Britain of defending India and Egypt. Those causes are enough to account for present difficulties. The loss of overseas investments has been of no great importance.

Canada and the United States acted immorally and unwisely in forcing Britain to liquidate part of her investments in these countries, in payment for "assistance" in a common war. That should be admitted. The total loss involved was small, and has been repaid many times over in post-war grants and credits. Britain has made a tremendous effort to rebuild her economy, which has been amazingly successful, except to the extent to which it has been inhibited and delayed by socialist experimentation. What now stands in the way is the stupid insistence on the theory that government officials can determine suitable exchange rates for currencies. This blocks trade between nations. Even the ten provinces of Canada, with no tariffs against each other, would fail to trade with each other on an adequate scale if each province had its own currency, and tried to establish the exchange value of that currency in terms of the currencies of the other provinces.

I have no interest in Mr. Beder's theories of why socialism has always failed. I do protest against his misstatement of the real reasons for its failure in Britain between 1945 and 1949.

*P. C. Armstrong, Montreal, P.Q.*

[E. A. Beder writes: It is quite true that the British balance of payment troubles result from a complex of causes, but loss of income from overseas investment is the biggest factor. Dr. Marsh's figures which Dr. Armstrong publicizes are quite misleading. The net British position on Invisibles was + £232 million in 1938, and + £32 million in 1948 (annual rate). A drop of £200 million. The *Economist*, presenting these statistics, says "the invisible account instead of almost covering the visible deficit now covers only one-tenth of it. For this the great increase in the overseas expenditures of the government and the even greater fall in investment income are to blame." (Sept. 25, 1948).

To Mr. McLure: When you are right there is no harm in being dogmatic. There is no particular merit in embracing "the middle way," it is just another liberal illusion. The British solution lies far beyond the nationalization of any industry. I tried to deal with that in the January issue. Marxists ascribe the existing dictatorship in the Soviet Union to the low productivity of the economy (you cannot socialize shortages), its political isolation, and the specific nature of Stalin's thought processes. If the gross national product were doubled it would be interesting to see if the dictatorship continued.]

The Editor: The "review" of *Lost Boundaries* in the November issue seems to me to warrant a lot of criticism.

I for one have been delighted to see films dealing with the problem of racial prejudice in the last few months. The story of *Lost Boundaries* was simply that of a Negro doctor and his family passing as white in a white community and comes to a climax when the white community discovers that "their" doctor is a Negro, and ends with the minister preaching for tolerance and brotherhood. Certainly the picture left the thinking part of the audience wondering what would happen to the children, who they would marry, etc. There

could be no pat answer to that problem. In some places the children would be accepted, in others they wouldn't. Some people would accept them; others wouldn't.

If D. Mosdell is upset because the film didn't start when it ended and left her and a lot of other people thinking (is that bad?) it is regrettable, but that is no excuse for not reviewing the film that was "shown." Incidentally, *Lost Boundaries* was based on a true story, so that a little time would be needed to find out how the children were accepted or how they married.

Another impression given by the "review" is that *Lost Boundaries* is just another Hollywood movie. This is because the remarks about the film are tacked on the end of another review about a Hollywood movie "act of violence."

Actually *Lost Boundaries* was produced by Louis de Rochemont, who is recognized as the foremost documentary film maker in the U.S.A. For my money *Lost Boundaries* was both entertaining and educational and a real improvement over the usual fare. *Larry Sefton*, Hamilton, Ont.

[D. Mosdell writes: We gave *Lost Boundaries* all the space we considered it deserved, and judged it harshly because it not only failed to show race prejudice in action in a community, but sent its audience away comfortably reassured that tolerance and brotherhood preached on Sunday will *ipso facto* be practised on Monday. "Frivolous" was the word we used, and "frivolous" was the word we meant.]

Mr. Sefton says he found the film educational. Perhaps he means that the film pointed out that Negroes, once they escape the squalid surroundings of Harlem, live very much the same sort of lives as whites in the same income bracket; a point which need not (I hope) be made to anyone north of the Mason-Dixon line.]

## TURNING NEW LEAVES

► A NEW TRANSLATION of *Don Quixote*, the result of sixteen years of work, has now made its appearance,\* and it is, we are told, the first really good English rendering of the world's greatest novel. There have been fourteen English versions altogether, but two made in the eighteenth century, one by Peter Motteux, a naturalized Frenchman who also completed the Urquhart Rabelais, and one by Charles Jarvis, a friend of Pope, have held the field. The former is the better known in America, and the latter in England. Mr. Putnam's introduction is severe on Motteux, whom he accuses of having coarsened two of the subtlest characters in fiction into a couple of slapstick buffoons. This opinion of Motteux is endorsed by other Cervantes scholars and a number of reviewers.

Well, the scholars must know; but for vigor and the free play of a rough but spontaneous wit, there is a lot to be said for the earlier version. Mr. Putnam has perhaps reacted too strongly against it (after all there is some buffoonery in Cervantes), and sometimes his own sentences tinkle along rather languidly, the rhythms too carefully calculated, the English idioms and colloquialisms slipping a little too glibly into their Spanish context. But when one has said this, one hastens to concede that, both for its text and for its admirably terse notes, this is the translation that the modern reader would want. Certainly wherever delicacy is required, Mr. Putnam is to Motteux as Pegasus to Rosinante.

Perhaps it would be fairer to say that Motteux represents what the eighteenth century, an age of solid intellectual and social values, saw in *Don Quixote*. The eighteenth century could accept the folly of Quixote and the clownishness of Sancho as simply as it accepted the cowardice of

Falstaff, and it saw them in the sharp light of the world of common sense that gave them both so many hard knocks. From the point of view of, say, Smollett (another translator of *Quixote*), hard knocks are funny when they happen to people who ask for them. In the romantic period *Don Quixote* is read in a romantic light, and joins Hamlet, Byron, Werther and the noble savage in that gloomy and desperate band of idealists who maintain the purity of their egoism in the teeth of a scoffing society. Here we have passed from the squat, grinning caricatures of Hogarth's illustrations to the haunting and sinister paintings of Daumier, where the knight of the sorrowful countenance looks like a pale horse riding on Death. "One of the saddest books in the world," a Victorian critic asserts. Mr. Putnam's translation belongs to the twentieth century, which assumes that an author becomes great by virtue of Saying Something Significant. He quotes Mr. Lionel Trilling on Cervantes' treatment of the problem of appearance and reality, and puts references to the existentialism of Kierkegaard and Sartre and the symbolic logic of Bertrand Russell into his footnotes. These references are very unobtrusive, but they will probably set the tone for the renewed criticism which his translation will certainly inspire.

Cervantes' intention in writing *Don Quixote* was no doubt to ridicule the stories of chivalry, with a result summarized in the Dewey Library Catalogue as: "immense vogue of books of chivalry despite legislation till publication of *Don Quixote*; thereafter only one written." But great art comes from harnessing a conscious intention to the creative powers beneath consciousness, and we do not get closer to the author's meaning by getting closer to the book's meaning. The greater the book, the more obvious it is that the author's consciousness merely held the nozzle of the hose, so to speak. For instance, we can see after the event what Cervantes can hardly have seen during it, that the tale of the crack-brained knight is one of the profoundest social parables in history. The feudal chivalric aristocracy has

## *A Martyr to Sartre*

I put a bullet through my head  
To make quite sure that I was dead.  
The glowing sulphur-light of pain  
Set in the brain-pan of my brain  
Had no concern at all to me  
Since I was dead as dead could be.

Out in the street I wandered then  
To show my shattered head to men  
And force the fools to realize  
The enemy behind their eyes  
And though they shrank, to make them see  
The terrors of mortality.

But one and all they passed me by  
With not a shudder, not a cry;  
I looked again and saw that each  
Had put himself beyond my reach  
Had put a bullet through his head  
But each denied that he was dead.

In horror to my room I fled.  
The mirror spoke to me; it said  
Stand to your image back to back.  
I stood and felt the Conscious crack,  
My image flowed out by my side,  
I took its place. And then I died.

Patrick Waddington.

\*DON QUIXOTE: Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (trans. by Samuel Putnam); 2 vols. Macmillan (Viking); pp. 1043; \$12.50.

been caught at the precise moment of its departure from the European stage, caught with its armor rusty, its ideals faded to dreams, its sense of reality hopelessly lost. Elsewhere, in England, for instance, a new middle class not only seized its money and power but stole its ideals as well: the story of Quixote is the story of Spain, with its great culture destroyed by poverty and bigotry, with its weak middle class and its rabble of fanatically proud pauper-nobles. "And so, Sancho my friend," pleads Quixote, "do not be grieved at that which pleases me, nor seek to make the world over, nor to unhinge the institution of knight-errantry." But it is no use; the made-over world is already there.

However, the book has profounder levels than that of historical parable. Cervantes may be said to have defined a principle almost as important for fiction-writing as charity is for religion: the principle that if people are ridiculous they are pathetic, and if they have pathos they have dignity. The Don is ridiculous chiefly when he is successful, or thinks he is: when he has routed a flock of sheep or set free a gang of criminals. But with every beating he gets his dignity grows on us, and we realize how genuinely faithful he is to the code of chivalry. He is courteous, gentle, chaste, generous (except that he has no money), intelligent and cultured within the limits of his obsession, and, of course, courageous. Not only was the code of chivalry a real code that helped to hold a real civilization together, but these are real virtues, and would be if chivalry had never existed. Is this solid core of moral reality in the middle of Quixote's illusion that makes him so ambiguous a figure. As with Alice's Wonderland, where we feel that no world can be completely fantastic where such Victorian infantile primness can survive intact, we feel that the humanity of Quixote is much more solidly established than the minor scholastic quibble about whether the windmills are really windmills or not. So we understand the author's explanation of Sancho's fidelity very well: "Sancho Panza alone thought that all his master said was the truth, for he was well acquainted with him, having known him since birth."

If we want satire on martial courage we should expect to find most of it in the army, and nobody could have written *Don Quixote* except an old soldier. But to satirize martial courage is not to ridicule it, but to show the contrast between the courage itself, which may be genuine and even splendid, and the reasons for its appearance—that is, the causes of war—which are usually squalid and foolish. And however silly the Don may look in his barber-basin helmet, the qualities that make him so haunting a figure are, in part, the qualities that make a lost cause glamorous. Yet a lost cause, even one so literally lost as Quixote's, is pathetic as well as glamorous, and no one can miss the pathos in Quixote. Pathos arises when attention is focussed on an individual excluded from a community. The child or animal whose affection is repulsed, the colored student whose offering of intelligence is rejected by a white society, the girl whose manners are laughed at by rich people because she is poor—these are the figures we find pathetic, and with them is the mad knight whose enormous will to rescue the helpless and destroy the evil shows itself in such blundering nonsense.

As humanity is always trying to find human scapegoats, it dislikes having its attention called to their human qualities, and besides, the fear of being oneself isolated is perhaps the deepest fear we have—a much deeper one than the relatively cosy and sociable bogey of hell. Whatever the reason, long-sustained pathos is intolerable, and the story of Quixote would be intolerable without the fidelity of Sancho, who enables the knight to form a society of his own. Even so it would be hard going without the good humor and charity of so many of the people they meet. There must have been times when Cervantes wished he had not made

Quixote so pathetic. In the second part the Don is in charge of a Duke who has read Part One, and who is responsible for most of the adventures, going even to the point of allowing the knight and squire to live for a time in an external replica of their fantasy. He does this purely to amuse himself, but still a fundamental act of social acceptance underlies Part Two. One gentleman has recognized another, however much he has turned him into a licensed jester.

*Don Quixote* is the world's first and perhaps still its greatest novel, yet the path it indicated was not the one that the novel followed. Imitations of his pedantic crackpot and simple companion, such as we get in *Huckleberry Finn* or *Tristram Shandy*, do not constitute a tradition. The novel is an art of character study, and character study is mainly a matter of showing how social behavior is conditioned by hidden factors. Realistic novelists select mainly the factors of class and social status; psychological ones select those of individual experience. Very few have followed Cervantes in tackling the far deeper problem of private mythology, of how one's behavior is affected by a structure of ideas in which one thinks one believes. Flaubert (in *Madame Bovary*) was one such follower, and Dostoevsky another; but the full exploitation of this field has yet to come. One hopes it will come soon, as the shallower fields are nearly exhausted.

I have hinted that Quixote does not so much believe his fantasy as think he believes it: an occasional remark to Sancho like "upon my word, you are as mad as I am" gives him away. His fantasy is the facade of a still deeper destructive instinct, for at one level of his mind Don Quixote is one of the long line of madmen ending in Hitler who have tried to destroy the present under the pretext of restoring the past. It is at this level that we find the puzzle of reality and appearance. The physical world rocks and sways as Quixote explains that his valiant deeds are real, but appear ridiculous through the artfulness of enchanters. It is difficult to know where a man will stop who regards the Creator of "reality" as a magician to be outwitted. One feels at times that Quixote rather enjoys the paradoxical clash of his inner and outer worlds, and that, like so many who have committed themselves to heroism, he finds that the damage he does is something of an end in itself.

But, the Don insists, he really has a positive mission: it is to restore the world to the golden age. In a passage of wonderful irony he tells Sancho that the golden age would soon return if people would speak the simple truth, stop flattering their superiors, and show things exactly as they are. The childish element in Quixote, which breaks through in fantasy, believes that the golden age is a wonderful time of make-believe, where endless dreams of conquered giants and rescued maidens keep coming true. But then he comes across a group of peasants eating acorns and goat's cheese, who hospitably invite him to join them, and he suddenly breaks out into a long panegyric about the golden age, which, it appears, was not an age of chivalry at all but an age of complete simplicity and equality. In such a kingdom the social difference between himself and Sancho no longer exists, and he asks Sancho to sit beside him, quoting from the Bible that the humble shall be exalted. The bedrock of Quixote's mind has been reached, and it is not romantic at all, but apocalyptic. The childishness has disappeared and the genuinely childlike has taken its place, the simple acceptance of innocence.

This dream returns at the end, where Quixote and Sancho plan to retire to a quiet pastoral life, and the author intends us to feel that by dying Quixote has picked a surer means of getting there. With this in our minds, we are not at all surprised that when Sancho, who has been promised the rule of an island, actually gets one to admin-

ister, he rules it so efficiently and wisely that he has to be yanked out of office in a hurry before he wrecks the Spanish aristocracy. We are even less surprised to find that Quixote's advice to him is full of sound and humane good sense. The world is still looking for that lost island, and it still asks for nothing better than to have Sancho for its ruler and Don Quixote for his honored counsellor.

NORTHROP FRYE.

## BOOKS REVIEWED

MACKENZIE KING OF CANADA: H. Reginald Hardy; Oxford; pp. xii, 390; \$3.50.

This is a pleasant readable book about the Canadian Prime Minister who held office longer than any other Prime Minister in the history of the British Empire; but it is not much more. To anyone who has been in the habit of following Canadian politics with some continuous attention for the past twenty-five years or so it throws much more light on the intellectual standards and on the powers of insight of the present Press Gallery at Ottawa than it does on Mr. King. Compare it with the kind of writing about his political contemporaries that a newspaper man like Willison did, when he sat down to write books, and you can't help feeling that there has been a sad falling-off in the standards of Canadian political journalism during the past generation.

Of all our Canadian institutions which are engaged in the task of producing a more educated public opinion, the Ottawa Press Gallery, or, at any rate, the English-speaking section of it, does the most inadequate job. It is inadequate not because it is partisan or dishonest, but simply because it is superficial and trivial. (Though, in making this criticism, one should hasten to except from it such able reporters as Wilfrid Eggleston and Blair Fraser.) What our Canadian political journalists need is a stiff course of study in Machiavelli and the history of the Popes and English political biography, in historians such as Gibbon and Acton and Creighton, in contemporary thinkers like Bertrand Russell and Rheinhold Niebuhr, to give them a deeper and more mature understanding of the problems of human government and political power.

This book has the usual picture of Mr. King as the high-minded idealistic believer in conciliation and social harmony. It brings out very well how his early experience in industrial conciliation set the pattern for his later political career in the practice of group diplomacy. But a man who rises to be Prime Minister and who holds on to that office for twenty years must have something tougher about him than is here revealed. No one achieves great power in Church or State who is not a supreme egoist and who doesn't possess to an abnormal degree the capacity to use and discard other men ruthlessly for his own purposes. We always have to complain about Canadian political biographies that they never get far into their subject's inner mind. What goes on in a Canadian politician's mind, when he is not politicking? What does he talk about among his intimates, what does he write about in intimate letters, what is his religion? It is unfair, of course, to ask for answers to these questions in a book about a man who is still living. But a political biographer should have done some reflecting on the question of what politics is all about.

Mr. Hardy has some revealing stories. Such as the one about Mr. Leonard Brockington's complaint, when he was drafting speeches for the Prime Minister, that all his purple passages were blue-pencilled by his boss. "Ah, the one thing you forget, Brockington, is that the public remembers purple passages." He has some good phrases like the one about the Prime Minister's Buddha-like attitude of im-

## BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS

RYERSON

### THE COLLECTED POEMS OF

RAYMOND KNISTER

\$2.50

With a Memoir by Dorothy Livesay. At long last, Raymond Knister's poems are published. Most of them originally appeared in *The Canadian Forum*. They are chosen, as is fitting, by his old friend Dorothy Livesay. She has also written a forty-one page memoir which is of very great significance to all students of Canadian literature.

### PIONEER IN COMMUNITY

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by Watson Thomson—A fascinating biography of Henri Lasserre, founder of the Robert Owen Foundation of Canada. The purpose of this foundation is to assist co-operative communities, group-farms, industries, educational undertakings, etc. Henri Lasserre was a Christian Socialist. This is a book of the first importance to everyone interested in the co-operative movement.

### MR. AMES AGAINST TIME

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by Philip Child, winner of the Ryerson Fiction Award, 1949—"This novel tells of what happens in people's minds and spirits when they are faced with bitter odds. In fact, it is a book about courage—how and why it works in some people, and does not work in others."—From the Author's Radio Interview.

### INITIATION TO MOOD

\$2.25

by Carol Coates—"In substance chiefly these poems resemble the *bokku*. Almost every one is a comment on life and usually the comment has a sharp edge. More—almost everyone is a miniature moment of vision."—Thorlef Larsen, Professor of English, University of British Columbia.

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MACMILLAN

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by Kenneth McNeill Wells—This eagerly awaited sequel to *The Owl Pen* describes the settled delights of country living, enlivened by many outrageous and hilarious farmers' tall tales, and there are 20 beautiful wood engravings by Lucille Ollie.

### RINK RAT

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by Don MacMillan, author of *Only the Stars Know*—Once upon a time a writer began to brood about the tremendous story wrapped up in hockey. He saw it as a very human tale about real people, set against the background of the fastest game on earth. And so he wrote *Rink Rat*—a fast-moving and impressive novel.

### THE MEN OF THE MOUNTED

\$5.75

by Nora Kelly—A full-dress history of the legendary Royal Canadian Mounted Police from the formation of the Force to the present time written in an exciting narrative style for the general reader. Illustrated.

### UNTOLD TALES OF OLD QUEBEC

\$3.50

by E. C. Woodley—Intriguing tales of romance and adventure in old Quebec, including young Nelson's love affair with a Quebec beauty, rescued from oblivion and told with wit and artistry by an internationally famous historian. Illustrated by W. R. Stark.

December, 1949

mobility during his later years, and the one about the Salvador-Dali atmosphere of Kingsmere with its weird collection of curios from all over the world. He has a good account of what he rightly calls Mr. King's crowning achievement in preventing a breakdown during the conscription crisis of 1942-44. He makes interesting revelations about the attitude of individual ministers in this period, such as the fact that at one point Jimmy Gardiner threatened to join the CCF if conscription were adopted. Evidently the CCF owes Mr. King a debt of gratitude of which most of its members have been unaware.

But the book is not a well balanced one. The whole of Mr. King's career down to the outbreak of World War II is covered in 173 pages, and then there follow 206 pages on the 1940's. The author is very fuzzy about imperial relations and has no clear account of one of Mr. King's great achievements, in preventing Canada from being absorbed into a junior partnership in an imperial firm and in securing her position as a separate autonomous nation in world affairs. He has even less about the masterly tactics by which Mr. King eliminated the Progressives of the 1920's and by which he has hitherto defeated the CCF. The founders of the CCF were trying to establish the English pattern of politics in Canada, with a definite party division between left and right. Mr. King has succeeded in maintaining the North American pattern, with a governing party that is an amorphous opportunistic collection of diverse interest groups all the way from the far left to the far right. His resounding triumph in the 1949 elections, after he had officially retired, following on his successful retention of office in 1945—in these two elections he defeated both old and new opponents, in spite of the opportunities which wartime discontents and post-war dislocations offered them—would seem to show that he has a more acute understanding of the realities of North American politics than those of us on the left can as yet claim. But you won't find anything of this in Mr. Hardy's book. Somehow or other life in Ottawa, for most of its inhabitants, seems to reduce national politics to the parochial level of that overgrown village.

*Frank H. Underhill.*

THE CRY AND THE COVENANT: Morton Thompson; Doubleday & Co.; pp. 469; \$3.75.

Books, so Hyman Kaplan might have declaimed, may be good, better, or first-class; again, books may be bad, worse, or rotten. In such a scheme, this novel ranks as first-class. Its chief locale is the charming Vienna of the 19th century. It is the life story of Semmelweis, a man who expounded the true nature of child-bed fever, and died insane at the age of 47.

When Semmelweis first went on the staff of the Lying-in Division of the Vienna General Hospital in 1846, four out of ten recently delivered women died of blood poisoning. This was due to the fact that fatal cases were post-mortem by the obstetrician, who carried the infection to the new arrivals awaiting delivery. Since the germ theory of disease was then in a chiropractic state, the association seemed impossible to the practitioners of the day. Ignorance and folly are at first more than a match for wisdom and science, even when the latter are expounded with passionate conviction, and Semmelweis only slowly obtained acceptance of his teaching that child-bed fever is a contagious disease. Chronic exasperation finally drove him insane, and he died prematurely of blood poisoning.

This in skeleton form is the story; it will make an excellent movie. The reader who has a feeling for 19th century European history will be thrilled by its dramatic scenes, which take on a cosmic quality, since the struggle thus portrayed concerns all of us. Incidentally, there is an account

of the evolution of modern medical science, much of which stems from Austria and Germany.

The human race which is delighted by mechanical innovations, resents political changes, and brands biological innovations as perversions. A sound history of man could be written concerning the gradual incorporation into human culture of various biological inventions, beginning, for example, with the domestication of animals in prehistory, and ending with such a cataclysmic innovation as birth control. Where there are records, it will be found that the innovation was regarded as the work of the devil; Sir Walter Raleigh's execution, for instance, was as much due to his introduction of tobacco as to anything else. One can imagine the opposition encountered by the first man who drank milk which he obtained by manipulating the teats of cows.

Semmelweis, like Harvey before him, like Pasteur and Lister after him, was resented, not because of logic, but because of an instinctive aversion to anyone who tampers with life and attempts to alter it.

This is a brilliant and important novel, carefully and tenderly written.

*J. Markowitz.*

THE PORTABLE MEDIEVAL READER: James B. Ross and Mary M. McLaughlin; Macmillan (Viking Press); pp. 690; \$2.75.

The Viking Portable Library has added to its series another volume, *The Portable Medieval Reader*, edited by James B. Ross and Mary M. McLaughlin, who have themselves prepared the necessary translations of many of the sources excerpted. An assemblage of quotations, few of which exceed a dozen pages in length, can scarcely portray the diverse patterns of culture dominating the four dynamic centuries of Western European culture (approximately 1050 to 1450) here chosen as topic; but several characteristic

## KATHLEEN COBURN'S

### The GRANDMOTHERS

One of *The Forum's* leading contributors here tells the unforgettable stories of the Canadian "Ruth" and the Czechoslovakian "Babicka." They never met, but these two indomitable women faced their turbulent lives with the same unwavering courage, insight and humour. With her customary skill, Kathleen Coburn weaves into the rich tapestry of this main narrative a delightful thread of laughter, securing it with many charming glimpses into the rural and village life of her dual settings. John Hall's drawings and unique jacket design perfectly complement the text to make THE GRANDMOTHERS an ideal gift book.

*Drawings by JOHN HALL*

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phenomena such as philosophic speculation, ecclesiastical and educational reorganization, geographical exploration, and social unrest are successfully indicated.

The dust-wrapper of the book claims too much when it suggests that the book represents "the world of the middle ages." Actually the only countries which are at all fully portrayed are those whose history has been most extensively studied—England, France, Spain, Germany, and Italy. Areas such as Wales, Ireland, Scandinavia, and the Byzantine Empire, which may be reckoned peripheral solely because their culture is as yet less familiar to the historian, are represented, if at all, by only the briefest treatment. But the introduction written by the two editors shows that they do not intend either to endorse or encourage slipshod and hasty generalizations about the spirit of an era. All that one might ask of them is that they should indicate more specifically the dates of the authors they quote.

The extracts are, for the most part, not merely significant but also lively; and some of the authors, as, for instance, Gui de Chauliac, may have escaped the attention even of the specialist. The editors make no apology for omitting some of the greatest medieval literary monuments, such as *The Song of Roland*, *The Nibelungenlied*, *The Divine Comedy*, and many lesser gems, such as *Aucassin and Nicolette* and *Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight*. They may be excused, however, since such works do not lend themselves readily to anthologizing; and many readers may be impelled to turn to the easily accessible translations of these when once the *Medieval Reader* has aroused their curiosity concerning the nature of a vanished era so different from the present and yet so influential upon the culture of today.

Charles W. Dunn.

TURVEY: Earle Birney; McClelland & Stewart; pp. 288; \$3.25.

One of Canada's major contemporary poets has recorded his impressions of the processes of the Canadian Army in this extremely amusing picaresque novel. Centred about the vagaries and blunders of a good-natured dolt, Private Thomas Leadbeater Turvey, it carries the reader through all that frenzied mechanism of Basic Training Centres, Reinforcement Camps, Detention Barracks and Military Hospitals, which ever cried for such whimsical treatment as Mr. Birney has here bestowed upon it. It is as though countless thousands of soldiers' letters had marshalled themselves together, along with unrevealed annals of illicit revels and unadmitted errors, to testify under the author's direction concerning the Soldier's Life. A more delightful meandering plot replaces the epistolary form such a description might suggest, and Pte. Turvey is ever present to testify that all the "snafus" in the Soldier's Life were not laid on by higher command, as any letter home would insist; however, Mr. Birney has not let elude him that droll, perpetual refrain, The Soldier's Lament, mournful obligato of every bull session and every letter to Mother. Like Herbie and the Sad Sack, Pte. Turvey is the uncomprehending, acquiescent soul, whose private ends and basic desires are continually being ensnared in the complicated mechanism which was not above suffocating its very masters under endless layers of triplicates and quadrupletes.

After the numerous American war novels, almost all of which treat their subject with a hectic seriousness calculated to demonstrate that war consists of the extinction of herds of obscene rats in a setting whose wastes and infernal wildernesses are a suitable externalization of the inner scene, it is a pleasure to discover that some of us still see the comedy of it all, and find human beings, in some cases, to be amiable souls. Tragedy and comedy in war are quite often the same event looked at from different points of view,

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just as they are elsewhere in life. It is neither necessary nor desirable to take one's typewriter out into Eliot's Waste Land whenever one wishes to create a work of art. Although I would not class *Turvey* as satire, for even the dourest "beefeater" saw the joke in the days and ways of army life (and, in his case, resented it bitterly and volubly), Mr. Birney has certainly staked his claim next door to satire, in the domain of the genuinely comic. Pte. Turvey, T.L., is an endearing and intensely human clown, bungling his grinning way through situations in which any honest clown would revel in similar abandon. The novel will make a first-rate Christmas gift for the veteran of the Canadian Army, who will not take long to find in it some of his own military biography and a great deal of fun.

G. J. Wood.

**FORTUNE, MY FOE:** Robertson Davies; Clarke, Irwin; pp. 100; \$1.50.

The publication of an actable full-length play by a Canadian is a unique event and the tendency to greet it with uncritical acclaim is a disservice to the author. *Fortune, My Foe* is an unusual and interesting play, but it has definite defects which should be pointed out.

The editor of the *Peterborough Examiner*, judging by his Marchbanks column, is a man of strong dislikes which include "do-gooders" and "parlor pinks." And so, to ridicule them, three stereotyped characters are thrust in. A puppet show within the play is ingenious, but should some of the other characters be similarly wooden? No doubt, on the stage, clever actors could bring them to life as the puppet-master does his articulated figures, but in reading they are irritating caricatures.

The play's main theme concerns the loss of talented young Canadians to the United States. The obvious and most difficult solution, of course, is to present them with as good or better opportunities at home. I fear that Nicholas's stand, "Canada is a hard country to live in. Still, if we all run away it will never be any better," will not influence many. Most of the "geniuses of easy virtue" who have the chance will continue to go southward.

Another character should be added to the caste: the Irate Taxpayer demanding repayment for educational costs before the young genius is permitted to emigrate.

John A. Dewar.

**THE FAITH OF A SCIENTIST:** H. B. Speakman; Clarke, Irwin; pp. 79; \$1.50.

A ranking Canadian scientist here faces and answers some crucial challenges to contemporary education. The author's humanity and sincerity, and the wide range of his knowledge and interests, enrich every page. And everybody should familiarize himself with the trenchant simile with which he exhibits the implications of that compelling question: where are we going?

Dr. Speakman's message seems, in essence, to be this: pure science, widely neglected by technology, is nevertheless vital not only to progress but to technology itself; the pursuit of science to the neglect or exclusion of other human interests leads to the degradation of the individual; science knows nothing of human values, while humanity degenerates or progresses, lives or dies, according as it pursues certain values or certain others; over-confidence in science, especially in science applied to human relations—which the author appears to regard as pseudo-science—is widespread, dangerous, and futile; for understanding and appreciation of the human values one must turn to the Humanities; for their sanction, to Christianity.

Unfortunately the author's argument is not too well integrated—a result, mostly, of its origin in three separate addresses. Too often important steps in it are obscured by

their context or by the order of their presentation. Dr. Speakman's message will be still more fruitful of effect if he will later present it in a more unified and somewhat amplified form—the latter need applying especially to his treatment of the Humanities. And I hope he will top it off with some recommendations, however drastic, as to what we should do about it.

R. E. K. Pemberton.

**THE INNOCENT TRAVELLER:** Ethel Wilson; Macmillan; pp. 277; \$2.75.

Topaz Edgeworth, a loquacious maiden lady, existed for nearly one hundred years. Born in England in the 1840's she lived a placid life that is almost as tiresome to the reader as it must have been to her. With the exception of falling in love in a very ladylike manner with a rather vague gentleman who might have been borrowed from Jane Austen, nothing much happened to her. After fifty idle and useless years in a standardized Victorian household with a stock Victorian father, she moved to Vancouver with a widowed sister and a maiden niece.

The description of life in Vancouver from the 1890's to the present decade is not particularly thrilling. The author missed an opportunity to introduce some of the vivid life that must have characterized the western terminus of the C.P.R. during the great days of the Klondike gold rush. But the change of scenery makes no change in the lives of these placid women. Life just passed them by.

If you are interested in knowing how much can be written about negative personalities, then read *The Innocent Traveller*. In spite of the fact that Topaz Edgeworth lives and dies with the reputation of a great talker, no one would ever remember her save that she was a great bore.

Mark G. Cohen.

**THE WORLD IN THE ATTIC:** Wright Morris; S. J. Reginald Saunders; pp. 189; \$3.75.

There is this to be said for the Feudal Age: all that was required of Gurth was that he be a good swineherd, and he might live and die contentedly, respected by his peers. They did not go away, to return later and sneer at him for not having Made Good. When Clyde Muncy, smart business man en route to New York, stopped off at Junction, the whistle-stop town in Nebraska where he had spent his child-

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hood, he didn't miss one evidence of stagnation, from Mabel's Lunch, where Mabel didn't know what iced coffee was, to the end of the town where "the sky swept in like a tide . . . only the husk of several time-tired buildings remained . . . a row of old men with their hands tied behind them—facing the firing squad, the careening globe and the impending flood."

A graphic picture of a dying town is drawn, and it would have been better if Clyde and his wife had not been the Mr. and Mrs. North sort of people who know all the answers. They find nobody who is not either feeble-witted or slightly obscene. They move in on his old school friend, Bud Hibbard, who, with his wife and two children, lives in a tiny box of a house. Bud and Nelly, to accommodate them, put their children to sleep on the floor, and move out to the unscreened garage. In the morning Clyde's acknowledgement of this courtesy is to find Nelly's appearance amusing because her eyelids were mosquito bitten. The death of Miss Caddy, the mystery woman in the Big House, delays them temporarily. Childhood memories of Miss Caddy, who came from the South, and her feud with the Hibbard family, seem to be developing to some sort of climax, but the theme fades aimlessly out, and the Muncys leave Junction, determined never to return, which will be much too soon for the overworked Nelly, if she is the girl I take her for.

*Eleanor McNaught.*

**TIME IN AMBUSH:** Isabelle Hughes; Collins; pp. 257; \$3.00.

Miss Hughes' new novel concerns a married woman with something in her past, apparently, an old lover, which her husband doesn't know about. The old lover turns up, of course, bitter, mocking, mysterious, but no match, poor guy, for the heroine's come-hither-go-hence song and dance. On the side, she strives to infuse go-get and confidence in a shy, awkward young girl, who obviously has nothing wrong with her except a crush on the heroine. Amid the near-tragic results of which, the heroine's vegetable husband finally comes to life and, mercifully sparing us the stock and god-like psychoanalyst, himself unveils the hidden cause—our heroine's childhood trauma. Result: "She kept her face turned towards him, and he saw a look come over it that was like the first ray of sunlight struggling through heavy clouds." *Time in Ambush* is a sort of psychological detective story without any murders. There just should have been. Dozens.

*Duncan Robertson.*

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